

239 L16

THE
Dramatic Works
OF

J O H N H O M E

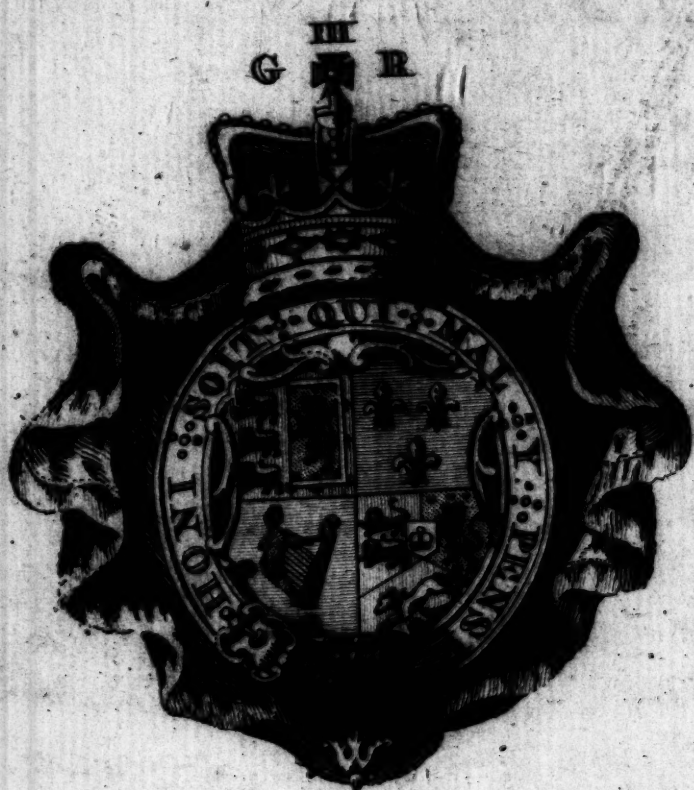


X



L O N D O N :

Printed for A. MILLAR in the Strand.
MDCCLX.



TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

G E O R G E

PRINCE of WALES.

S I R,

IN Dedications, especially those which Poets write, Mankind expect to find little Sentiment, and less Truth. A grateful Imagination adorns its Benefactor with every Virtue, and even flatters with Sincerity. Hence the Portrait of each Patron of the Muses is drawn with the same Outline, and finished as a Model of Perfection. Instructed by the Errors of others, I presume not to make the Pane-

iv DEDICATION.

gyrick of the Prince of WALES, not to extol the Patronage of Literature as the most shining Quality of a Prince. Your Royal Highness will permit me to mention one sort of Patronage which can never be praised too much; that, I mean, which extending its Influence to the whole Society, forms and excites the Genius of Individuals by exalting the Spirit of the State.

Institutions, that revive in a great and highly civilized People those Virtues of Courage, Manhood, and Love of their Country, which are most apt, in the Progress of Refinement, to decay, produce at the same time that pleasing and ornamental Genius, which cannot subsist in a Mind that does not partake of those Qualities which it describes. This is an Observation

DEDICATION. V

tion which has escaped the Notice of the greater Part of Writers, who have inquired into the Causes of the Growth and Decay of Poetry and Eloquence ; but it has not escaped the Penetration of LONGINUS, who writing in the Decline of the ROMAN Empire, and lamenting that the true Sublime was not to be found in the Works of his Time, boldly imputes that Defect to the Change of Policy ; and enumerates with Indignation the Vices of Avarice, Effeminacy, and Pusillanimity, which arising from the Loss of Liberty, had so intralled and debased the Minds of Men, that they could not look up, as he calls it, to any thing elevated and sublime : And here, as in other Questions, the great Critic quotes the Authority of his Master HOMER. *The Day of Slavery bereaves a Man of half his Virtue.* The Experience of succeeding Times

vi DEDICATION

Times has shewn that Genius is affected by Changes less violent than the Loss of Liberty ; that it ever flourishes in Times of Vigour and Enterprize, and languishes amidst the sure Corruption of an inactive Age.

Your Royal Highness, as Heir apparent of the *British* Empire, hath in view the noblest Field that ever a laudable Ambition entered. The envied State of this Nation cannot remain precisely as it is ; the Tide must flow, or ebb faster than it has ever flowed. A Prince destined in such a Period to reign, begins a memorable *Æra* of Perfection or Degeneracy. The serious Cares and princely Studies of your Youth, the visible Tenor of your generous and constant Mind, have filled the Breasts of all good Men with hopes of you equal
to

DEDICATION. vii

to their Wishes. That these Hopes may
be fulfilled in their utmost Extent, is the
sincere and ardent Prayer of

Your Royal Highness's

most humble,

most obedient,

and most devoted Servant,

JOHN HOME.

DEDICATION

to their Willing. That the Holy Spirit

be the guide of our feet

and the Lord be with us

Our Father

TRAGEDY

and the Holy Spirit

THEATRE

MONUMENT

RECORDS

and the Holy Spirit

DOUGLAS:

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is ACTED at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

COVENT-GARDEN.

Non ego sum vates, sed prisce consilii avi.

THE

DOUGLAS

TRAGEDY

THEATRE-ROYAL

COVENT-GARDEN

PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. SPARKS.

*I*N antient times, when Britain's trade was arms,
 And the lov'd music of her youth, alarms;
 A god-like race sustain'd fair England's fame:
 Who has not heard of gallant PIERCY's name?
 Ay, and of DOUGLAS? Such illustrious foes
 In rival Rome and Carthage never rose!
 From age to age bright shone the British fire,
 And every hero was a hero's fire.
 When powerful fate decreed one warrior's doom,
 Up sprung the phoenix from his parent's tomb.
 But whilst those generous rivals fought and fell,
 Those generous rivals lov'd each other well;
 Tho' many a bloody field was lost and won,
 Nothing in hate, in honour all was done.
 When PIERCY wrong'd defy'd his prince or peers,
 Fast came the DOUGLAS, with his Scottish spears;
 And, when proud DOUGLAS made the King his foe,
 For DOUGLAS, PIERCY bent his English bow.
 Expell'd their native homes by adverse fate,
 They knock'd alternate at each other's gate:
 Then blaz'd the castle, at the midnight hour,
 For in whose arms had shook its firmest tower.

This night a DOUGLAS your protection claims;
 A wife! a mother! Pity's softest names:
 The story of her woes indulgent hear,
 And grant your suppliant all she begs, a tear.
 In confidence she begs; and hopes to find
 Each English Breast, like noble PIERCY's, kind.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

As represented at London.

Lord RANDOLPH,

Mr. RIDOUT.

GLENALVON,

Mr. SMITH.

NORVAL, DOUGLAS,

Mr. BARRY.

STRANGER,

Mr. SPARKS.

SERVANTS.

W O M E N.

MATILDA, Lady RANDOLPH,

} Mrs. WOFFINGTON.

ANNA,

Mrs. VINCENT.

PROLOGUE

Spoken at EDINBURGH.

IN days of classic fame, when Persia's Lord
Oppos'd his millions to the Grecian sword,
Flourish'd the state of Athens, small her store,
Rugged her soil, and rocky was her shore,
Like Caledonia's: yet she gain'd a name
That stands unrival'd in the rolls of fame.
Such proud pre-eminence not valour gave,
(For who than Sparta's dauntless sons more brave?)
But learning, and the love of every art,
That Virgin Pallas and the Muse impart.
Above the rest the Tragic Muse admir'd
Each Attic Breast with noblest Passions fir'd,
In peace their poets with their heroes shar'd
Glory, the hero's, and the bard's reward.
The Tragic Muse each glorious record kept,
And, o'er the kings she conquer'd, Athens wept.
Here let me cease, impatient for the scene,
To you I need not praise the Tragic Queen:
Oft has this audience soft compassion shown
To woes of heroes, heroes not their own.
This night our scenes no common tear demand,
He comes, the hero of your native land!
DOUGLAS, a name thro' all the world renown'd,
A name that rouses like the trumpet's sound!
Oft have your fathers, prodigal of life,
A DOUGLAS follow'd thro' the bloody strife;

B 3

See the PERSES of Æschylus.

Hesit

*Hests have been known at that dread name to yield,
And, DOUGLAS dead, his name bath won the field.*

*Listen attentive to the various tale,
Mark if the author's kindred feelings fail;
Sway'd by alternate hopes, alternate fears,
He waits the test of your congenial tears.
If they shall flow, back to the Muse he flies,
And bids your heroes in succession rise;
Collects the wandering warriors as they roam,
DOUGLAS assures them of a welcome-home.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE,

As represented at EDINBURGH.

LORD RANDOLPH,	Mr. YOUNGER,
GLENALVON,	Mr. LOVE.
NORVAL, DOUGLAS,	Mr. DIGGS.
STRANGER,	Mr. HAYMAN.
SERVANTS, &c.	

W O M E N.

MATILDA, Lady RANDOLPH,	Mrs. WARD.
ANNA,	Mrs. HOPKINS.

DOUGLAS:

TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

The court of a castle surrounded with woods.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

YE woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart,
Farewel a while : I will not leave you long ;
For in your shades I deem some spirit dwells,
Who from the chiding stream, or groaning oak,
Still hears, and answers to MATILDA's moan.
O DOUGLAS ! DOUGLAS ! if departed ghosts
Are e'er permitted to review this world,
Within the circle of that wood thou art,
And with the passion of immortals hear'st
My lamentation : hear'st thy wretched wife
Weep for her husband slain, her infant lost.

8 DOUGLAS:

My brother's timeless death I seem to mourn;
 Who perish'd with thee on this fatal day.
 To thee I lift my voice; to thee address
 The plaint which mortal ear has never heard.
 O disregard me not; tho' I am call'd
 Another's now, my heart is wholly thine.
 Incapable of change, affection lies
 Buried, my DOUGLAS, in thy bloody grave.
 But RANDOLPH comes, whom fate has made my Lord,
 To chide my anguish, and defraud the dead.

Enter LORD RANDOLPH.

Again these weeds of woe! say, dost thou well
 To feed a passion which consumes thy life?
 The living claim some duty; vainly thou
 Bestow'st thy cares upon the silent dead.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Silent, alas! is he for whom I mourn:
 Childless, without memorial of his name,
 He only now in my remembrance lives.
 This fatal day stirs my time-settled sorrow,
 Troubles afresh the fountain of my heart.

Lord RANDOLPH.

When was it pure of sadness! These black weeds
 Express the wonted colour of thy mind,
 For ever dark and dismal. Seven long years
 Are pass'd, since we were join'd by sacred ties:
 Clouds all the while have hung upon thy brow,
 Nor broke, nor parted by one gleam of joy.

Time,

A TRAGEDY.

Time, that wears out the trace of deepest anguish,
As the sea smooths the prints made in the sand,
Has past o'er thee in vain.

Lady RANDOLPH.

If time to come

Should prove as ineffectual, yet, my Lord,
Thou canst not blame me. When our Scottish youth
Vy'd with each other for my luckless love,
Oft I besought them, I implor'd them all
Not to assail me with my father's aid,
Nor blend their better destiny with mine.
For melancholy had congeal'd my blood,
And froze affection in my chilly breast.
At last my Sire, rous'd with the base attempt
To force me from him, which thou rend'rst vain,
To his own daughter bow'd his hoary head,
Besought me to commiserate his age,
And vow'd he should not, could not die in peace,
Unless he saw me wedded, and secur'd
From violence and outrage. Then, my Lord!
In my extreme distress I call'd on thee,
Thee I bespake, profess'd my strong desire
To lead a single, solitary life,
And begg'd thy Nobleness, not to demand
Her for a wife whose heart was dead to love.
How then persist'd'st after this, thou know'st,
And must confess that I am not unjust,
Nor more to thee than to myself injurious.

10 DOUGLAS:

Lord RANDOLPH.

That I confess; yet ever must regret
The grief I cannot cure. Would thou wert not
Compos'd of grief and tenderness alone,
But had'st a spark of other passions in thee,
Pride, anger, vanity, the strong desire
Of admiration, dear to woman-kind;
These might contend with, and allay thy grief,
As meeting tides and currents smoothe our firth.

Lady RANDOLPH.

To such a cause the human mind oft owes
Its transient calm, a calm I envy not.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Sure thou art not the daughter of Sir MALCOLM:
Strong was his rage, eternal his resentment:
For when thy brother fell, he smil'd to hear
That DOUGLAS' son in the same field was slain.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Oh! rake not up the ashes of my fathers:
Implacable resentment was their crime,
And grievous has the expiation been.
Contending with the DOUGLAS, gallant lives
Of either house were lost; my ancestors
Compell'd, at last, to leave their ancient seat
On Tiviot's pleasant banks; and now, of them
No heir is left. Had they not been so stern,
I had not been the last of all my race.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Thy grief wrests to its purposes my words.

I never

A TRAGEDY.

I never ask'd of thee that ardent love,
Which in the breasts of fancy's children burns.
Decent affection and complacent kindness
Were all I wish'd for ; but I wish'd in vain.
Hence with the less regret my eyes behold
The storm of war that gathers o'er this land :
If I should perish by the Danish sword,
MATILDA would not shed one tear the more.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Thou do'st not think so : woeful as I am,
I love thy merit, and esteem thy virtues.
But whither go'st thou now ?

Lord RANDOLPH.

Straight to the camp,
Where every warrior on the tip-toe stands
Of expectation, and impatient asks
Each who arrives, if he is come to tell
The Danes are landed.

Lady RANDOLPH.

O, may adverse winds,
Far from the coast of Scotland, drive their fleet!
And every soldier of both hosts return
In peace and safety to his pleasant home!

Lord RANDOLPH.

Thou speak'st a woman's, hear a warrior's wish:
Right from their native land, the stormy north,
May the wind blow, till every keel is fix'd
Immoveable in Caledonia's strand!

Then shall our foes repent their bold invasion,
And roving armies shun the fatal shore.

Lady RANDOLPH.

War I detest : but war with foreign foes,
Whose manners, language, and whose looks are strange,
Is not so horrid, nor to me so hateful,
As that which with our neighbours oft we wage.
A river here, there an ideal line,
By fancy drawn, divides the sister kingdoms.
On each side dwells a people similar,
As twins are to each other ; valiant both ;
Both for their valour famous thro' the world.
Yet will they not unite their kindred arms,
And, if they must have war, wage distant war,
But with each other fight in cruel conflict.
Gallant in strife, and noble in their ire,
The battle is their pastime. They go forth
Gay in the morning, as to summer sport ;
When ev'ning comes, the glory of the morn,
The youthful warrior is a clod of clay.
Thus fall the prime of either hapless land ;
And such the fruit of Scotch and English wars.

Lord RANDOLPH.

I'll hear no more : this melody would make
A soldier drop his sword, and doff his arms,
Sit down and weep the conquests he has made ;
Yea, (like a monk), sing rest and peace in heav'n
To souls of warriors in his battles slain.
Lady, farewell : I leave thee not alone ;
Yonder comes one whose love makes duty light. *Exit.*

Enter

A TRAGEDY.

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Enter ANNA.

ANNA.

Forgive the rashness of your ANNA's love :
Urg'd by affection, I have thus presum'd
To interrupt your solitary thoughts ;
And warn you of the hours that you neglect,
And lose in sadness.

Lady RANDOLPH.

So to lose my hours
Is all the use I wish to make of time.

ANNA.

To blame thee, Lady, suits not with my state :
But sure I am, since death first prey'd on man,
Never did sister thus a brother mourn.
What had your sorrows been if you had lost,
In early youth, the husband of your heart ?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Oh !

ANNA.

Have I distress'd you with officious love,
And ill-tim'd mention of your brother's fate ?
Forgive me, Lady : humble tho' I am,
The mind I bear partakes not of my fortune ;
So fervently I love you, that to dry
These piteous tears, I'd throw my life away.

Lady RANDOLPH.

What power directed thy unconscious tongue
To speak as thou hast done ? to name——

ANNA.

DOUGLAS:

ANNA.

I know not:

But since my words have made my mistress tremble,
I will speak no more; but silent mix
My tears with her's.

Lady RANDOLPH.

No, thou shalt not be silent.

I'll trust thy faithful love, and thou shalt be
Henceforth th' instructed partner of my woes.
But what avails it? Can thy feeble pity
Roll back the flood of never ebbing time?
Compel the earth and ocean to give up
Their dead alive?

ANNA.

What means my noble mistress?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Didst thou not ask what had my sorrows been?—
If I in early youth had lost a husband?—
In the cold bosom of the earth is lodg'd,
Mangl'd with wounds, the husband of my youth;
And in some cavern of the ocean lies
My child and his.

ANNA.

O! Lady, most rever'd!

The tale wrapt up in your amazing words
Deign to unfold.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Alas! an ancient feud,

Hèreditary evil, was the source

A TRAGEDY

Of my misfortunes. Ruling fate decree'd,
 That my brave brother should in battle save
 The life of DOUGLAS' son, our house's foe;
 The youthful warriors vow'd eternal friendship;
 To see the vaunted sister of his friend
 Impatient, DOUGLAS to Balarno came,
 Under a borrow'd name.—— My heart he gain'd;
 Nor did I long refuse the hand he begg'd;
 My brother's presence authoris'd our marriage.
 Three weeks, three little weeks, with wings of down,
 Had o'er us flown, when my lov'd Lord was call'd
 To fight his father's battles; and with him,
 In spite of all my tears, did MALCOLM go.
 Scarce were they gone, when my stern Sire was told
 That the false stranger was Lord DOUGLAS' son.
 Frantic with rage, the Baron drew his sword,
 And question'd me. Alone, forsaken, faint,
 Kneeling beneath his sword, fault'ring I took
 An oath equivocal, that I ne'er would
 Wed one of DOUGLAS' name. Sincerity,
 Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
 Thy onward path! altho' the earth should gape,
 And from the gulph of hell destruction cry
 To take dissimulation's winding way.

ANNA.

Alas! how few of woman's fearful kind
 Durst own a truth so hardy!

Lady

Lady RANDOLPH.

The first truth

Is easiest to avow. This moral learn,
This precious moral, from my tragic tale,——
In a few days the dreadful tidings came
That DOUGLAS and my brother both were slain,
My lord! my life! my husband!——Mighty God!
What had I done to merit such affliction?

ANNA.

My dearest Lady! many a tale of tears
I've listen'd to; but never did I hear
A tale so sad as this.

Lady RANDOLPH.

In the first days

Of my distracting grief, I found myself——
As women wish to be who love their Lords.
But who durst tell my father? The good priest
Who join'd our hands, my brother's antient tutor,
With his lov'd MALCOLM, in the battle fell:
They two alone were privy to the marriage.
On silence and concealment I resolv'd,
Till time should make my father's fortune mine.
That very night on which my son was born,
My nurse, the only confident I had,
Set out with him to reach her sister's house:
But nurse, nor infant, have I ever seen
Or heard of, ANNA, since that fatal hour.
My murder'd child!——had thy fond mother fear'd
The loss of thee, she had loud fame defy'd,

Despis'd

A TRAGEDY.

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Despis'd her father's rage, her father's grief,
And wander'd with thee thro' the scorning world.

ANNA.

Not seen nor heard of! then perhaps he lives.

Lady RANDOLPH.

No. It was dark December: wind and rain
Had beat all night. Across the Carron lay
The destin'd road; and in its swelling flood
My faithful servant perish'd with my child.

O hapless son! of a most hapless fire! —

But they are both at rest; and I alone

Dwell in this world of woe, condemn'd to walk,

Like a guilt-troubl'd ghost, my painful rounds:

Nor has despitelful fate permitted me

The comfort of a solitary sorrow.

Tho' dead to love, I was compell'd to wed

RANDOLPH, who snatch'd me from a villain's arms;

And RANDOLPH now possesses the domains,

That by Sir MALCOLM's death on me devolv'd;

Domains, that should to DOUGLAS' son have giv'n

A Baron's title, and a Baron's power.

Such were my soothing thoughts, while I bewail'd

The slaughter'd father of a son unborn.

And when that son came, like a ray from heav'n,

Which shines and disappears; alas! my child!

How long did thy fond mother grasp the hope

Of having thee, she knew not how, restor'd.

Year after year hath worn her hope away;

But left still undiminish'd her desire.

ANNA.

ANNA.

The hand, that spins th' uneven thread of life,
May smooth the length that's yet to come of your's.

LADY RANDOLPH.

Not in this world : I have consider'd well
Its various evils, and on whom they fall.
Alas ! how oft does goodness wound itself ?
And sweet affection prove the spring of woe.
O ! had I died when my lov'd husband fell !
Had some good angel op'd to me the book
Of providence, and let me read my life,
My heart had broke when I beheld the sum
Of ills, which one by one I have endur'd.

ANNA.

That God, whose ministers good angels are,
Hath shut the book in mercy to mankind.
But we must leave this theme : GLENALVON comes :
I saw him bend on you his thoughtful eyes,
And hitherwards he slowly stalks his way.

LADY RANDOLPH.

I will avoid him. An ungracious person
Is doubly irksome in an hour like this.

ANNA.

Why speaks my Lady thus of RANDOLPH's heir ?

LADY RANDOLPH.

Because he's not the heir of RANDOLPH's virtues.
Subtle and shrewd, he offers to mankind
An artificial image of himself :
And he with ease can vary to the taste

OF

A TRAGEDY. 19

Of different men, its features. Self-den'y'd,
 And master of his appetites he seems;
 But his fierce nature, like a fox chain'd up,
 Watches to seize unseen the wish'd-for prey.
 Never were vice and virtue pois'd so ill,
 As in GLENALVON's unrelenting mind.
 Yet is he brave and politic in war,
 And stands aloft in these unruly times.
 Why I describe him thus I'll tell hereafter:
 Stay and detain him till I reach the castle.

Exit Lady RANDOLPH.

ANNA.

O happiness! where art thou to be found?
 I see thou dwellest not with birth and beauty,
 Tho' grac'd with grandeur, and in wealth array'd:
 Nor dost thou, it would seem, with virtue dwell;
 Else had this gentle Lady miss'd thee not.

Enter GLENALVON.

GLENALVON.

What dost thou muse on, meditating maid?
 Like some entranc'd and visionary seer
 On earth thou stand'st, thy thoughts ascend to heaven.

ANNA.

Wou'd that I were, e'en as thou say'st, a seer,
 To have my doubts by heav'nly vision clear'd!

GLENALVON.

What dost thou doubt of? what hast thou to do
 With subjects intricate? Thy youth, thy beauty,

Cannot

Cannot be question'd : think of these good gifts ;
And then thy contemplations will be pleasing.

ANNA.

Let women view yon monument of woe,
Then boast of beauty: who so fair as she?
But I must follow: this revolving day
Awakes the memory of her antient woes.

[Exit ANNA.]

GLENALVON *solus*.

So! — Lady RANDOLPH shuns me; by and by
I'll woo her as the lion wooes his brides.
The deed's a-doing now, that makes me lord
Of these rich valleys, and a chief of power.
The season is most apt; my sounding steps
Will not be heard amidst the din of arms.
RANDOLPH has liv'd too long: his better fate
Had the ascendant once, and kept me down:
When I had seiz'd the dame, by chance he came,
Rescu'd, and had the Lady for his labour;
I 'scap'd unknown: a slender consolation!
Heaven is my witness that I do not love
To sow in peril, and let others reap
The jocund harvest. Yet I am not safe:
By love, or something like it, stung, inflam'd,
Madly I blabb'd my passion to his wife,
And she has threaten'd to acquaint him of it.
The way of woman's will I do not know:
But well I know the Baron's wrath is deadly.

I will

A TRAGEDY. 21

will not live in fear : the man I dread
as a Dane to me ; ay, and the man
Who stands betwixt me and my chief desire,
No bar but he ; she has no kinsman near ;
No brother in his sister's quarrel bold ;
And for the righteous cause, a stranger's cause,
I know no chief that will defy GLENALVON.

End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

A Court, &c.

Enter Servants, and a Stranger at one door, and Lady RANDOLPH and ANNA at another.

Lady RANDOLPH.

WHAT means this clamour? Stranger! speak secure;

Hast thou been wrong'd? have these rude men presum'd
To vex the weary traveller on his way?

First SERVANT.

By us no stranger ever suffer'd wrong:
This man with outcry wild has call'd us forth;
So sore afraid he cannot speak his fears.

*Enter Lord RANDOLPH and young man, with their
swords drawn and bloody.*

Lady RANDOLPH.

Not vain the Stranger's fears! how fares my Lord?

Lord RANDOLPH.

That it fares well, thanks to this gallant youth,
Whose valour sav'd me from a wretched death!

As

down the winding dale I walk'd alone,
 At the cross way four armed men attack'd me:
 O'ers, I judge, from the licentious camp,
 Who would have quickly laid Lord RANDOLPH low,
 Had not this brave and generous Stranger come,
 Like my good angel, in the hour of fate,
 And, mocking danger, made my foes his own.
 They turn'd upon him: but his active arm
 Thruck to the ground, from whence they rose no more,
 The fiercest two; the others fled amain,
 And left him master of the bloody field.
 Speak, Lady RANDOLPH: upon Beauty's tongue,
 How well accents pleasing to the brave and bold.
 Speak, noble Dame, and thank him for thy Lord.

Lady RANDOLPH.

My Lord, I cannot speak what now I feel.
 My heart o'erflows with gratitude to heav'n,
 And to this noble youth, who, all unknown
 To you and yours, deliberated not,
 Nor paus'd at peril, but, humanely brave,
 Fought on your side, against such fearful odds.
 Have you yet learn'd of him, whom we should thank,
 Whom call the saviour of Lord RANDOLPH's life?

Lord RANDOLPH.

I ask'd that question, and he answer'd not:
 But I must know who my deliverer is. *(to the Stranger.)*

STRANGER.

A low-born man, of parentage obscure,
 Who nought can boast but his desire to be
 A soldier, and to gain a name in arms.

Lord

LORD RANDOLPH.

Whoe'er thou art, thy spirit is ennobl'd
By the great King of kings ! thou art ordain'd
And stamp'd a hero by the sovereign hand
Of Nature ! blush not, flower of modesty
As well as valour, to declare thy birth.

STRANGER.

My name is NORVAL : on the Grampian hills
My father feeds his flocks ; a frugal swain,
Whose constant cares were to increase his store,
And keep his only son, myself, at home.
For I had heard of battles, and I long'd
To follow to the field some warlike Lord :
And heaven soon granted what my Sire deny'd.
This moon which rose last night, round as my shield,
Had not yet fill'd her horns, when, by her light,
A band of fierce Barbarians, from the hills,
Rush'd like a torrent down upon the vale,
Sweeping our flocks and herds. The shepherds fled
For safety and for succour. I alone,
With bended bow, and quiver full of arrows,
Hover'd about the enemy, and mark'd
The road he took, then hasted to my friends ;
Whom, with a troop of fifty chosen men,
I met advancing. The pursuit I led,
Till we o'ertook the spoil-encumber'd foe.
We fought and conquer'd. Ere a sword was drawn,
An arrow from my bow had pierc'd their chief,
Who wore that day the arms which now I wear.

Returning

A TRAGEDY. 25

Returning home in triumph, I disdain'd
The shepherd's slothful life : and having heard
That our good King had summon'd his bold Peers
To lead their warriors to the Carron side,
I left my father's house, and took with me
A chosen servant to conduct my steps : —
Yon trembling coward who forsook his master,
Journeying with this intent, I past these towers,
And, heaven-directed, came this day to do
The happy deed that gilds my humble name.

Lord RANDOLPH.

He is as wise as brave. Was ever tale
With such a gallant modesty rehears'd ?
My brave deliverer ! thou shalt enter now
A nobler list, and in a monarch's fight
Contend with princes for the prize of fame ;
I will present thee to our Scottish King,
Whose valiant spirit ever valour lov'd.
Ha ! my MATILDA ! wherefore starts that tear ?

Lady RANDOLPH.

I cannot say : for various affections,
And strangely mingled, in my bosom swell ;
Yet each of them may well command a tear.
I joy that thou art safe, and I admire
Him and his fortunes who hath wrought thy safety ;
Yea, as my mind predicts, with thine his own.
Obscure and friendless, he the army sought,
Bent upon peril, in the range of death
Resolv'd to hunt for fame, and with his sword

C

To

To gain distinction which his birth deny'd,
 In this attempt unknown he might have perish'd,
 And gain'd, with all his valour, but oblivion,
 Now grac'd by thee, his virtue serves no more
 Beneath despair. The soldier now of hope
 He stands conspicuous; fame and great renown
 Are brought within the compass of his sword.
 On this my mind reflected, whilst you spoke,
 And blest the wonder-working Lord of heaven.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Pious and grateful ever are thy thoughts!
 My deeds shall follow where thou point'st the way.
 Next to myself, and equal to GLENALVON,
 In honour and command shall NORVAL be.

NORVAL.

I know not how to thank you. Rude I am
 In speech and manners: never till this hour
 Stood I in such a presence: yet, my Lord,
 There's something in my breast which makes me bold
 To say, that NORVAL ne'er will shame thy favour.

Lady RANDOLPH.

I will be sworn thou wilt not. Thou shalt be
 My knight; and ever, as thou didst to-day,
 With happy valour guard the life of RANDOLPH.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Well hast thou spoke. Let me forbid reply. [To NORVAL.]
 We are thy debtors still; thy high desert
 O'ertops our gratitude. I must proceed,
 As was at first intended, to the camp.

Some

A TRAGEDY.

27

Some of my train, I see, are speeding hither,
Impatient, doubtless, of their Lord's delay.
Go with me, NORVAL, and thine eyes shall see
The chosen warriors of thy native land,
Who languish for the fight, and beat the air
With brandish'd swords.

NORVAL.

Let us be gone, my Lord.

LORD RANDOLPH.

[To Lady RANDOLPH.]

About the time that the declining sun
Shall his broad orbit o'er yon hills suspend,
Expect us to return. This night once more
Within these walls I rest; my tent I pitch
To-morrow in the field. Prepare the feast.
Free is his heart who for his country fights:
He in the eve of battle may resign
Himself to social pleasure; sweetest then,
When danger to a soldier's soul endears
The human joy that never may return.

Exeunt RANDOLPH and NORVAL.

Lady RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Lady RANDOLPH.

His parting words have struck a fatal truth.
O DOUGLAS! DOUGLAS! tender was the time
When we two parted, ne'er to meet again!
How many years of anguish and despair

Has heav'n annex'd to those swift-passing hours
Of love and fondness ! Then my bosom's flame
Oft, as blown back by the rude breath of fear,
Return'd, and with redoubled ardour blaz'd.

ANNA.

May gracious heav'n pour the sweet balm of peace
Into the wounds that fester in your breast !
For earthly consolation cannot cure them.

Lady RANDOLPH.

One only cure can heav'n itself bestow ;—
A grave—that bed in which the weary rest.
Wretch that I am ! Alas ! why am I so ?
At every happy parent I repine !
How blest the mother of yon gallant NORVAL !
She for a living husband bore her pains,
And heard him bless her when a man was born :
She nurs'd her smiling infant on her breast ;
Tended the child, and rear'd the pleasing boy :
She, with affection's triumph, saw the youth
In grace and comeliness surpass his peers ;
Whilst I to a dead husband bore a son,
And to the roaring waters gave my child.

ANNA.

Alas ! alas ! why will you thus resume
Your grief afresh ? I thought that gallant youth
Would for a while have won you from your woe.
On him intent you gazed, with a look
Much more delighted, than your pensive eye
Has deign'd on other objects to bestow.

Lady

Lady RANDOLPH.

Delighted, say'st thou? Oh! even there mine eye
Found fuel for my life-consuming sorrow.
I thought, that, had the son of DOUGLAS liv'd,
He might have been like this young gallant stranger,
And pair'd with him in features and in shape;
In all endowments, as in years, I deem,
My boy with blooming NORVAL might have number'd.
Whilst thus I mus'd, a spark from fancy fell
On my sad heart, and kindled up a fondness
For this young stranger, wand'ring from his home,
And like an orphan cast upon my care.
I will protect thee (said I to myself)
With all my power, and grace with all my favour.

ANNA.

Sure heav'n will bless so generous a resolve.
You must, my noble Dame, exert your power:
You must awake: devices will be fram'd,
And arrows pointed at the breast of NORVAL.

Lady RANDOLPH.

GLENALVON's false and crafty head will work
Against a rival in his kinsman's love,
If I deter him not: I only can.
Bold as he is, GLENALVON will beware
How he pulls down the fabric that I raise.
I'll be the artist of young NORVAL's fortune.
'Tis pleasing to admire! most apt was I
To this affection in my better days;
Tho' now I seem to you shrunk up, retir'd

Within the narrow compass of my woe.
 Have you not sometimes seen an early flower
 Open its bud, and spread its silken leaves,
 To catch sweet airs, and odours to bestow;
 Then, by the keen blast nipt, pull in its leaves,
 'And, tho' still living, die to scent and beauty!
 Emblem of me: affliction, like a storm,
 Hath kill'd the forward blossom of my heart.

Enter GLENALVON.

GLENALVON.

Where is my dearest kinsman, noble RANDOLPH?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Have you not heard, GLENALVON, of the base——

GLENALVON.

I have: and that the villains may not 'scape,
 With a strong hand I have begirt the wood.
 If they lurk there, alive they shall be taken,
 And torture force from them th' important secret,
 Whether some foe of RANDOLPH hid their swords,
 Or if——

Lady RANDOLPH.

That care becomes a kinsman's love.

I have a counsel for GLENALVON's ear. [*Exit ANNA.*]

GLENALVON.

To him your counsels always are commands.

Lady RANDOLPH.

I have not found so: thou art known to me.

GLENALVON.

A TRAGEDY. 31

GLENALVON.

Known!

Lady RANDOLPH.

And most certain is my cause of knowledge.

GLENALVON.

What do you know? By the most blessed cross,
You much amaze me. No created being,
Yourself except, durst thus accost GLENALVON.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Is guilt so bold! and dost thou make a merit
Of thy pretended meekness! This to me,
Who, with a gentleness which duty blames,
Have hitherto conceal'd what, if divulg'd,
Would make thee nothing; or, what's worse than that,
An outcast beggar, and unpitied too!
For mortals shudder at a crime like thine.

GLENALVON.

Thy virtue awes me. First of womankind!
Permit me yet to say, that the fond man,
Whom love transports beyond strict virtue's bounds,
If he is brought by love to misery,
In fortune ruin'd, as in mind forlorn,
Unpitied cannot be. Pity's the alms
Which on such beggars freely is bestow'd:
For mortals know that love is still their lord,
And o'er their vain resolves advances still:
As fire, when kindled by our shepherds, moves
Thro' the dry heath against the fanning wind.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Reserve these accents for some other ear.
 To love's apology I listen not.
 Mark thou my words ; for it is meet thou should'st.
 His brave deliverer RANDOLPH here retains.
 Perhaps his presence may not please thee well :
 But, at thy peril, practise ought against him :
 Let not thy jealousy attempt to shake
 And loosen the good root he has in RANDOLPH ;
 Whose favourites, I know, thou hast supplanted.
 Thou look'st at me, as if thou fain would'st pry
 Into my heart. 'Tis open as my speech.
 I give this early caution, and put on
 The curb, before thy temper breaks away.
 'The friendless Stranger my protection claims :
 His friend I am, and be not thou his foe. [Exit.

Manet GLENALVON.

Child that I was, to start at my own shadow,
 And be the shallow fool of coward conscience !
 I am not what I have been ; what I should be.
 The darts of destiny have almost pierc'd
 My marble heart. Had I one grain of faith
 In holy legends, and religious tales,
 I should conclude there was an arm above,
 That fought against me, and malignant turn'd,
 To catch myself, the subtle snare I set.
 Why, rape and murder are not simple means !
 Th' imperfect rape to RANDOLPH gave a spouse ;

And

A TRAGEDY.

33

And the intended murder introduc'd
 A favourite to hide the sun from me ;
 And, worst of all, a rival. Burning hell !
 This were thy centre, if I thought she lov'd him !
 'Tis certain she contemns me ; nay, commands me,
 And waves the flag of her displeasure o'er me,
 In his behalf. And shall I thus be brav'd ?
 Curb'd, as she calls it, by dame chastity ?
 Infernal fiends, if any fiends there are
 More fierce than hate, ambition, and revenge,
 Rise up and fill my bosom with your fires,
 And policy remorseless ! Chance may spoil
 A single aim ; but perseverance must
 Prosper at last. For chance and fate are words ;
 Persistent wisdom is the fate of man.
 Darkly a project peers upon my mind,
 Like the red moon when rising in the east,
 Cross'd and divided by strange-colour'd clouds.
 I'll seek the slave who came with NORVAL hither,
 And for his cowardice was spurned from him.
 I've known a follower's rankled bosom breed
 Venom most fatal to his heedless Lord. [Exit.

End of the SECOND ACT.

C 5.

A C T

A C T III.

*A Court, &c. as before.**Enter ANNA.*

ANNA:

THY vassals, Grief! great Nature's order break,
 And change the noon-tide to the midnight hour.
 Whilst Lady RANDOLPH sleeps, I will walk forth,
 And taste the air that breathes on yonder bank.
 Sweet may her slumbers be! Ye ministers
 Of gracious heaven who love the human race,
 Angels and seraphs who delight in goodness!
 Forfake your skies, and to her couch descend!
 There from her fancy chase those dismal forms
 That haunt her waking; her sad spirit charm
 With images celestial, such as please
 The blest'd above upon their golden beds.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

One of the vile assassins is secur'd.
 We found the villain lurking in the wood:

With

A TRAGEDY.

With dreadful imprecations he denies
All knowledge of the crime. But this is not
His first essay: these jewels were conceal'd
In the most secret places of his garment;
Belike the spoils of some that he has murder'd.

ANNA.
Let me look on them. Ha! here is a heart,
The chosen crest of Douglas' vallant name!
These are no vulgar jewels. Guard the wretch.
[Exit ANNA.]

Enter Servants with a Prisoner.

PRISONER.
I know no more than does the child unborn
Of what you charge me with.

FIRST SERVANT.
You say so, Sir!
But torture soon shall make you speak the truth.
Behold the Lady of Lord RANDOLPH comes:
Prepare yourself to meet her just revenge.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH and ANNA.

ANNA.
Summon your utmost fortitude, before
You speak with him. Your dignity, your fame,
Are now at stake. Think of the fatal secret,
Which in a moment from your lips may fly.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Thou shalt behold me, with a desperate heart,
Hear how my infant perish'd. See he kneels.

[The Prisoner kneels.]

PRISONER.

Heav'n bless that countenance, so sweet and mild!
A judge like thee makes innocence more bold;
O save me, Lady! from these cruel men,
Who have attack'd and seiz'd me; who accuse
Me of intended murder. As I hope
For mercy at the judgment-seat of God,
The tender lamb, that never nipt the grass,
Is not more innocent than I of murder.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Of this man's guilt what proof can ye produce?

First SERVANT.

We found him lurking in the hollow Glynn.
When view'd and call'd upon, amaz'd, he fled.
We overtook him, and inquir'd from whence
And what he was: he said, he came from far,
And was upon his journey to the camp.
Not satisfy'd with this, we search'd his cloaths,
And found these jewels; whose rich value plead
Most powerfully against him. Hard he seems
And old in villainy. Permit us try
His stubbornness against the torture's force.

PRISONER.

O gentle Lady! by your Lord's dear life!
Which these weak hands, I swear, did ne'er assail;

And

A TRAGEDY

37

And by your children's welfare, spare my age!
Let not the iron tear my antient joints;
And my grey hairs bring to the grave with pain.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Account for these: thine own they cannot be:
For these, I say: be steadfast to the truth;
Detected falshood is most certain death.

[ANNA removes the Servants and returns.]

PRISONER.

Alas! I'm sore beset! let never man,
For sake of lucre, sin against his soul!
Eternal justice is in this most just!
I, guiltless now, must former guilt reveal.

Lady RANDOLPH.

O! ANNA, hear!—once more I charge thee speak
The truth direct: for these to me foretell
And certify a part of thy narration;
With which if the remainder tallies not,
An instant and a dreadful death abides thee.

PRISONER.

Then, thus adjur'd, I'll speak to thee as just
As if you were the minister of heaven,
Sent down to search the secret sins of men.

SOME eighteen years ago, I rented land
Of brave Sir MALCOLM, then BALARMO's Lord;
But falling to decay, his servants seiz'd
All that I had, and then turn'd me and mine,
(Four helpless infants and their weeping mother)
Out to the mercy of the winter winds.

A little.

A little hovel by the river's side
 Receiv'd us: there hard labour, and the skill
 In fishing, which was formerly my sport,
 Supported life. Whilst thus we poorly liv'd,
 One stormy night, as I remember well,
 The wind and rain beat hard upon our roof:
 Red came the river down, and loud and oft
 The angry spirit of the water shriek'd.
 At the dead hour of night was heard the cry
 Of one in jeopardy. I rose, and ran
 To where the circling eddy of a pool,
 Beneath the ford, us'd oft to bring within
 My reach whatever floating thing the stream
 Had caught. The voice was ceas'd; the person lost:
 But looking sad and earnest on the waters,
 By the moon's light I saw, whirl'd round and round,
 A basket: soon I drew it to the bank,
 And nestled curious there an infant lay.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Was he alive?

PRISONER.

He was.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Inhuman that thou art!

How could'st thou kill what waves and tempests spar'd?

PRISONER.

I am not so inhuman.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Didst thou not?

ANNA.

ANNA.

My noble mistress, you are mov'd too much :
 This man has not the aspect of stern murder :
 Let him go on, and you, I hope, will hear
 Good tidings of your kinsman's long lost child.

PRISONER.

The needy man, who has known better days,
 One whom distress has spited at the world,
 Is he whom tempting fiends would pitch upon
 To do such deeds, as make the prosperous men
 Lift up their hands and wonder who could do them.
 And such a man was I ; a man declin'd,
 Who saw no end of black adversity :
 Yet, for the wealth of kingdoms, I would not
 Have touch'd that infant with a hand of harm.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Ha ! dost thou say so ? Then perhaps he lives !

PRISONER.

Not many days ago he was alive.

Lady RANDOLPH.

O ! God of heav'n ! Did he then die so lately ?

PRISONER.

I did not say he died ; I hope he lives.
 Not many days ago these eyes beheld
 Him, flourishing in youth, and health, and beauty.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Where is he now ?

PRISONER.

Alas ! I know not where.

Lady

Lady RANDOLPH.

Oh fate ! I fear thee still. Thou riddler, speak
Direct and clear ; else I will search thy soul.

ANNA.

Permit me, ever honour'd ! Keen impatience,
Tho' hard to be restrain'd, defeats itself. —
Pursue thy story with a faithful tongue,
To the last hour that thou didst keep the child.

PRISONER.

Fear not my faith, tho' I must speak my shame:
Within the cradle, where the infant lay,
Was stow'd a mighty store of gold and jewels :
Tempted by which we did resolve to hide,
From all the world, this wonderful event,
And like a peasant breed the noble child.
That none might mark the change of our estate,
We left the country, travell'd to the North,
Bought flocks and herds, and gradually brought forth
Our secret wealth. But God's all-seeing eye
Beheld our avarice, and smote us sore.
For one by one all our own children died,
And he, the Stranger, sole remain'd the heir
Of what indeed was his. Fain then would I,
Who with a father's fondness lov'd the boy,
Have trusted him, now in the dawn of youth,
With his own secret ; but my anxious wife,
Foreboding evil, never would consent.
Mean while the stripling grew in years and beauty ;
And, as we oft observ'd, he bore himself,

Not

A TRAGEDY.

41

Not as the offspring of our cottage blood ;
 For nature will break out : mild with the mild,
 But with the forward he was fierce as fire,
 And night and day he talk'd of war and arms.
 I set myself against his warlike bent ;
 But all in vain : for when a desperate band
 Of robbers from the savage mountains came——

Lady RANDOLPH.

Eternal Providence ! What is thy name ?

PRISONER.

My name is NORVAL ; and my name he bears.

Lady RANDOLPH.

'Tis he ; 'tis he himself ! It is my son !
 O sovereign mercy ! 'Twas my child I saw !
 No wonder, ANNA, that my bosom burn'd.

ANNA.

Just are your transports : ne'er was woman's heart
 Prov'd with such fierce extremes. High fated Dame !
 But yet remember that you are beheld
 By servile eyes ; your gestures may be seen
 Impassion'd strange ; perhaps your words o'erheard.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Well dost thou counsel, ANNA : heaven bestow
 On me that wisdom which my state requires !

ANNA.

The moments of deliberation pass,
 And soon you must resolve. This useful man
 Must be dismiss'd in safety, ere my Lord
 Shall with his brave deliverer return.

PRISONER.

PRISONER.

If I, amidst astonishment and fear,
Have of your words and gestures rightly judg'd,
Thou art the daughter of my ancient master;
The child I rescu'd from the flood is thine.

LADY RANDOLPH.

With thee dissimulation now were vain.
I am indeed the daughter of Sir MALCOLM;
The child thou rescu'dst from the flood is mine.

PRISONER.

Bless'd be the hour that made me a poor man!
My poverty hath sav'd my master's house!

LADY RANDOLPH.

Thy words surprize me: sure thou dost not feign:
The tear stands in thine eye: such love from thee
Sir MALCOLM's house deserv'd not; if aright
Thou told'st the story of thy own distress.

PRISONER.

Sir MALCOLM of our Barons was the flower;
The fastest friend, the best, the kindest master:
But ah! he knew not of my sad estate.
After that battle, where his gallant son,
Your own brave brother, fell, the good old Lord
Grew desperate and reckless of the world;
And never, as he erst was wont, went forth
To overlook the conduct of his servants.
By them I was thrust out, and them I blame:
May heav'n so judge me as I judg'd my master!
And God so love me as I love his race!

Lady

A TRAGEDY. 43

Lady RANDOLPH.

His race shall yet reward thee. On thy faith
Depends the fate of thy lov'd master's house.
Rememb'rest thou a little lonely hut,
That like a holy hermitage appears
Among the cliffs of Carron?

PRISONER.

I remember

The cottage of the cliffs.

Lady RANDOLPH.

'Tis that I mean:

There dwells a man of venerable age,
Who in my father's service spent his youth:
Tell him I sent thee, and with him remain,
Till I shall call upon thee to declare,
Before the King and Nobles, what thou now
To me hast told. No more but this, and thou
Shalt live in honour all thy future days:
Thy son so long shall call thee father still,
And all the land shall bless the man, who sav'd
The son of DOUGLAS, and Sir MALCOLM's heir.
Remember well my words: if thou should'st meet
Him whom thou call'st thy son, still call him so;
And mention nothing of his nobler father.

PRISONER.

Fear not that I shall mar so fair an harvest,
By putting in my sickle ere 'tis ripe.
Why did I leave my home and ancient dame?
To find the youth to tell him all I knew,

And

Lady

And make him wear these jewels in his arms ;
Which might, I thought, be challeng'd, and so bring
To light the secret of his noble birth.

[*Lady RANDOLPH goes towards the Servant*]

Lady RANDOLPH.

This man is not th' assassin you suspected,
Tho' chance combin'd some likelihoods against him.
He is the faithful bearer of the jewels
To their right owner, whom in haste he seeks.
'Tis meet that you should put him on his way,
Since your mistaken zeal hath dragg'd him hither.

[*Exeunt Stranger and Servant*]

Lady RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Lady RANDOLPH.

My faithful ANNA ! dost thou share my joy ?
I know thou dost. Unparallell'd event !
Reaching from heav'n to earth, Jehovah's arm
Snatch'd from the waves, and brings to me my son !
Judge of the widow, and the orphan's father !
Accept a widow's and a mother's thanks
For such a gift ! What does my ANNA think
Of the young eaglet of a valiant nest ?
How soon he gaz'd on bright and burning arms,
Spurn'd the low dunghill where his fate had thrown him
And tower'd up to the region of his fire !

ANNA

ANNA. How fondly did your eyes devour the boy!
 mysterious nature, with the unseen cord
 powerful instinct, drew you to your own.

Lady RANDOLPH. The ready story of his birth believ'd
 preste my fancy quite; nor did he owe
 any likeness my so sudden favour:
 now I long to see his face again,
 to mine every feature, and find out
 the lineaments of DOUGLAS, or my own.
 most of all I long to let him know
 who his true parents are, to clasp his neck,
 and tell him all the story of his father.

ANNA. With wary caution you must bear yourself
 public, lest your tenderness break forth,
 and in observers stir conjectures strange.
 if a cherub in the shape of woman
 should walk this world, yet defamation would,
 make a vile cur, bark at the angel's train—
 to-day the Baron started at your tears.

Lady RANDOLPH. He did so, ANNA! well thy Mistress knows,
 the least circumstance, mote of offence,
 could touch the Baron's eye, his sight would be
 with jealousy disorder'd. But the more
 does behove me instant to declare
 the birth of DOUGLAS, and assert his rights.

This

This night, I purpose with my son to meet,
 Reveal the secret, and consult with him :
 For wise he is, or my fond judgment errs.
 As he does now, so look'd his noble father,
 Array'd in nature's ease: his mien, his speech,
 Were sweetly simple, and full oft deceiv'd
 Those trivial mortals who seem always wise.
 But, when the matter match'd his mighty mind,
 Up rose the Hero : on his piercing eye
 Sat Observation : on each glance of thought
 Decision follow'd, as the thunder-bolt
 Pursues the flash.

ANNA.

That demon haunts you still.

Behold GLENALVON.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Now I shun him not.

This day I brav'd him in behalf of NORVAL :

Perhaps too far : at least my nicer fears

For DOUGLAS thus interpret:

Enter GLENALVON.

GLENALVON.

Noble Dame !

The hov'ring Dane at last his men hath landed ;

No band of pirates ; but a mighty host

That come to settle where their valour conquers ;

To win a country, or to lose themselves.

Lady

A TRAGEDY. 47

Lady RANDOLPH.

at whence comes this intelligence, GLENALVON?

GLENALVON.

A nimble courier sent from yonder camp,
To hasten up the chieftains of the north,
Inform'd me, as he past, that the fierce Dane
Had on the eastern coast of Lothian landed,
Near to that place where the sea-rock immense,
Amazing Bas, looks o'er a fertile land.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Then must this western army march to join
The warlike troops that guard Edina's tow'rs.

GLENALVON.

Beyond all question. If impairing time,
Has not effac'd the image of a place,
Once perfect in my breast, there is a wild
Which lies to westward of that mighty rock,
And seems by nature formed for the camp
Of water-wasted armies, whose chief strength
Lies in firm foot, unflank'd with warlike horse:
If martial skill directs the Danish lords,
There inaccessible their army lies
To our swift-scow'ring horse, the bloody field
Must man to man, and foot to foot, be fought.

Lady RANDOLPH.

How many mothers shall bewail their sons!
How many widows weep their husbands slain!
Ye dames of Denmark! ev'n for you I feel,
Who sadly sitting on the sea-beat shore,
Long look for lords that never shall return.

GLENALVON.

GLENALVON.

Oft has th' unconquer'd Caledonian sword
 Widow'd the north. The children of the slain
 Come, as I hope, to meet their fathers' fate.
 The monster war, with her infernal brood,
 Loud yelling fury, and life-ending pain,
 Are objects suited to GLENALVON's soul.
 Scorn is more grievous than the pains of death :
 Reproach more piercing than the pointed sword.

Lady RANDOLPH.

I scorn thee not, but when I ought to scorn ;
 Nor e'er reproach, but when insulted virtue
 Against audacious vice asserts herself.
 I own thy worth, GLENALVON ; none more apt
 Than I to praise thine eminence in arms,
 And be the echo of thy martial fame.
 No longer vainly feed a guilty passion :
 Go and pursue a lawful mistress, glory.
 Upon the Danish crests redeem thy fault,
 And let thy valour be the shield of RANDOLPH.

GLENALVON.

One instant stay, and hear an alter'd man.
 When beauty pleads for virtue, vice abash'd
 Flies its own colours, and goes o'er to virtue.
 I am your convert ; time will shew how truly :
 Yet one immediate proof I mean to give.
 That youth, for whom your ardent zeal to-day
 Somewhat too haughtily defy'd your slave,
 Amidst the shock of armies I'll defend,

And

And turn death from him, with a guardian arm.
 Sedate by use, my bosom maddens not
 At the tumultuous uproar of the field.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Act thus, GLENALVON, and I am thy friend:
 But that's thy least reward. Believe me, Sir,
 The truly generous is the truly wise,
 And he who loves not others, lives unblest.

[Exit Lady RANDOLPH.]

GLENALVON *solus.*

Amen! and virtue is its own reward!—
 I think that I have hit the very tone
 In which she loves to speak. Honey'd assent,
 How pleasant art thou to the taste of man,
 And woman also! flattery direct
 Rarely disgusts. They little know mankind
 Who doubt its operation: 'tis my key,
 And opes the wicket of the human heart.
 How far I have succeeded now I know not.
 Yet I incline to think her stormy virtue
 Is lull'd a while: 'tis her alone I fear:
 Whilst she and RANDOLPH live, and live in faith
 And amity, uncertain is my tenure.
 Fate o'er my head suspends disgrace and death,
 By that weak hair, a peevish female's will.
 I am not idle: but the ebbs and flows
 Of fortune's tide cannot be calculated.
 That slave of NORVAL's I have found most apt:

T O A

D

I shew'd

I shew'd him gold, and he has pawn'd his soul
To say and swear whatever I suggest.

NORVAL, I'm told, has that alluring look,
'Twixt man and woman, which I have observ'd
To charm the nicer and fantastic dames,
Who are, like Lady RANDOLPH, full of virtue.
In raising RANDOLPH's jealousy I may
But point him to the truth. He seldom errs
Who thinks the worst he can of womankind.

The End of the THIRD ACT.

A TRAGEDY

51

ACT IV.

Flourish of Trumpets.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH attended.

Lord RANDOLPH.

SUMmon an hundred horse, by break of day ;
To wait our pleasure at the castle-gate.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Alas ! my Lord ! I've heard unwelcome news ;
The Danes are landed.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Ay, no inroad this
Of the Northumbrian bent to take a spoil :
No sportive war, no tournament essay,
Of some young knight resolv'd to break a spear,
And stain with hostile blood his maiden arms.
The Danes are landed : we must beat them back,
Or live the slaves of Denmark.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Dreadful times !

D 2

Lord

Lord RANDOLPH.

The fenceless villages are all forsaken ;
The trembling mothers ; and their children lodg'd
In wall-girt towers and castles ; whilst the men
Retire indignant. Yet, like broken waves,
They but retire more awful to return.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Immense, as fame reports, the Danish host——

Lord RANDOLPH.

Were it as numerous as loud fame reports,
An army knit like ours would pierce it thro' :
Brothers, that shrink not from each other's side,
And fond companions, fill our warlike files :
For his dear offspring, and the wife he loves,
The husband, and the fearless father arm,
In vulgar breasts heroic ardor burns,
And the poor peasant mates his daring lord.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Men's minds are temper'd, like their swords, for war ;
Lovers of danger, on destruction's brink
They joy to rear erect their daring forms.
Hence, early graves ; hence, the lone widow's life ;
And the sad mother's grief-embitter'd age.
Where is our gallant guest ?

Lord RANDOLPH.

Down in the vale

I left him, managing a fiery steed,
Whose stubbornness had foil'd the strength and skill

Of

Of every rider. But behold he comes,
In earnest conversation with GLENALVON.

Enter NORVAL and GLENALVON.

GLENALVON! with the lark arise; go forth,
And lead my troops that lie in yonder vale:
Private I travel to the royal camp:
NORVAL, thou goest with me. But say, young man!
Where didst thou learn so to discourse of war,
And in such terms as I o'erheard to-day?
War is no village science, nor its phrase
A language taught amongst the shepherd swains.

NORVAL.

Small is the skill my Lord delights to praise
In him he favours.—— Hear from whence it came.
Beneath a mountain's brow, the most remote
And inaccessible by shepherds trod,
In a deep cave, dug by no mortal hand,
A hermit liv'd; a melancholy man,
Who was the wonder of our wand'ring swains.
Austere and lonely, cruel to himself,
Did they report him; the cold earth his bed,
Water his drink, his food the shepherds' alms,
I went to see him, and my heart was touch'd
With rev'rence and with pity. Mild he spake,
And, entering on discourse, such stories told
As made me oft revisit his sad cell.
For he had been a soldier in his youth;

And fought in famous battles, when the Peers
 Of Europe, by the bold GODFREDO led,
 Against th' usurping Infidel display'd
 The cross of Christ, and won the Holy Land.
 Pleas'd with my admiration, and the fire
 His speech struck from me, the old man won'd shake
 His years away, and aft his young encounters:
 Then, having shew'd his wounds, he'd sit him down,
 And all the live-long day discourse of war.
 To help my fancy, in the smooth green turf
 He cut the figures of the marshall'd hosts;
 Describ'd the motions, and explain'd the use
 Of the deep column, and the lengthen'd line,
 The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm.
 For all that Saracen or Christian knew
 Of war's vast art, was to this hermit known.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Why did this soldier in a desert hide
 Those qualities that should have grac'd a camp?

NORVAL.

That too at last I learn'd. Unhappy man!
 Returning homewards by Messina's port,
 Loaded with wealth and honours bravely won,
 A rude and boist'rous captain of the sea
 Fasten'd a quarrel on him. Fierce they fought:
 The stranger fell, and with his dying breath
 Declar'd his name and lineage! Mighty God!
 The soldier cried, my brother! Oh! my brother!

Lady RANDOLPH.

His brother!

NORVAL.

NORVAL.

Yes; of the same parents born;
 His only brother. They exchang'd forgiveness;
 And happy, in my mind, was he that died:
 For many deaths has the survivor suffer'd.
 In the wild desert on a rock he sits,
 Or on some nameless stream's untrodden banks,
 And ruminates all day his dreadful fate.
 At times, alas! not in his perfect mind!
 Holds dialogues with his lov'd brother's ghost;
 And oft each night forsakes his sullen couch,
 To make sad orisons for him he slew.

Lady RANDOLPH.

To what mysterious woes are mortals born!
 In this dire tragedy were there no more
 Unhappy persons? did the parents live?

NORVAL.

No; they were dead: kind heav'n had clos'd their eyes
 Before their son had shed his brother's blood.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Hard is his fate; for he was not to blame!
 There is a destiny in this strange world,
 Which oft decrees an undeserved doom:
 Let schoolmen tell us why.—From whence these sounds?

[Trumpets at a distance.]

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My Lord, the trumpets of the troops of Lorn:
 The valiant leader hails the noble RANDOLPH.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Mine antient guest! does he the warriors lead?
Has Denmark rous'd the brave old Knight to arms!

OFFICER.

No; worn with warfare, he resigns the sword.
His eldest hope, the valiant JOHN of LORN,
Now leads his kindred bands.

Lord RANDOLPH.

GLENALVON, go.

With hospitality's most strong request
Intreat the chief. [Exit GLENALVON.]

OFFICER.

My Lord, requests are vain.
He urges on, impatient of delay,
Stung with the tidings of the foe's approach.

Lord RANDOLPH.

May victory sit on the warrior's plume!
Bravest of men! his flocks and herds are safe;
Remote from war's alarms his pastures lie,
By mountains inaccessible secur'd:
Yet foremost he into the plain descends,
Eager to bleed in battles not his own.
Such were the heroes of the antient world:
Contemners they of indolence and gain;
But still for love of glory, and of arms,
Prone to encounter peril, and to lift
Against each strong antagonist the spear.
I'll go and press the hero to my breast.

[Exit RANDOLPH.]

Mauve

Manent Lady RANDOLPH and NORVAL.

Lady RANDOLPH.

The soldier's loftiness, the pride and pomp
Investing awful war, NORVAL, I see,
Transport thy youthful mind.

NORVAL.

Ah! should they not?

Blest be the hour I left my father's house!
I might have been a shepherd all my days,
And stole obscurely to a peasant's grave.
Now, if I live, with mighty chiefs I stand;
And, if I fall, with noble dust I lie.

Lady RANDOLPH.

There is a gen'rous spirit in thy breast,
That could have well sustain'd a prouder fortune.
This way with me; under yon spreading beech,
Unseen, unheard, by human eye or ear,
I will amaze thee with a wond'rous tale.

NORVAL.

Let there be danger, Lady, with the secret,
That I may hug it to my grateful heart,
And prove my faith. Command my sword, my life;
These are the sole possessions of poor NORVAL.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Know'st thou these gems?

NORVAL.

Durst I believe mine eyes,
I'd say I knew them, and they were my father's.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Thy father's, say'st thou! ah! they were thy father's!

NORVAL.

I saw them once, and curiously inquir'd
Of both my parents, whence such splendor came?
But I was check'd, and more could never learn.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Then learn of me, thou art not NORVAL's son.

NORVAL.

Not NORVAL's son!

Lady RANDOLPH.

Nor of a shepherd sprung.

NORVAL.

Lady, who am I then?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Noble thou art;

For noble was thy Sire!

NORVAL.

I will believe——

O! tell me farther! Say who was my father?

Lady RANDOLPH.

DOUGLAS!

NORVAL.

Lord DOUGLAS, whom to day I saw!

Lady RANDOLPH.

His younger brother.

NORVAL.

And in yonder camp!

Lady

Lady RANDOLPH.

Alas!

NORVAL.

You make me tremble——Sighs and tears!
Lives my brave father?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Ah! too brave indeed!
He fell in battle ere thyself was born.

NORVAL.

Ah me unhappy! ere I saw the light?
But does my mother live? I may conclude,
From my own fate, her portion has been sorrow.

Lady RANDOLPH.

She lives; but wastes her life in constant woe,
Weeping her husband slain, her infant lost.

NORVAL.

You that are skill'd so well in the sad story
Of my unhappy parents, and with tears
Bewail their destiny, now have compassion
Upon the offspring of the friends you lov'd!
O! tell me who, and where my mother is!
Oppress'd by a base world, perhaps she bends
Beneath the weight of other ills than grief;
And, desolate, implores of heav'n the aid
Her son should give. It is, it must be so——
Your countenance confesses that she's wretched.
O! tell me her condition! Can the sword——
Who shall resist me in a parent's cause?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Thy virtue ends her woe. — My son, my son!

I am thy mother, and the wife of DOUGLAS!

[Falls upon his neck.]

NORVAL.

O heav'n and earth, how wondrous is my fate!

Art thou my mother? Ever let me kneel!

Lady RANDOLPH.

Image of DOUGLAS! Fruit of fatal love!

All that I owe thy Sire, I pay to thee.

NORVAL.

Respect and admiration still possess me,

Checking the love and fondness of a son.

Yet I was filial to my humble parents.

But did my Sire surpass the rest of men,

As thou excellest all of womankind?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Arise, my son! In me thou dost behold

The poor remains of beauty once admir'd:

The autumn of my days is come already;

For sorrow made my summer haste away.

Yet in my prime I equal'd not thy father:

His eyes were like the eagle's, yet sometimes

Liker the dove's; and, as he pleas'd, he won

All hearts with softness, or with spirit aw'd.

NORVAL.

How did he fall? Sure 'twas a bloody field

When DOUGLAS died. O I have much to ask!

Lady

Lady RANDOLPH.

Hereafter thou shalt hear the lengthen'd tale
Of all thy father's and thy mother's woes.
At present this : thou art the rightful heir
Of yonder castle, and the wide domains
Which now Lord RANDOLPH, as my husband, holds.
But thou shalt not be wrong'd ; I have the power
To right thee still : before the King I'll kneel,
And call Lord DOUGLAS to protect his blood.

NORVAL.

The blood of DOUGLAS will protect itself.

Lady RANDOLPH.

But we shall need both friends and favour, boy,
To wrest thy lands and lordship from the gripe
Of RANDOLPH and his kinsman. Yet I think
My tale will move each gentle heart to pity,
My life incline the virtuous to believe.

NORVAL.

To be the son of DOUGLAS is to me
Inheritance enough. Declare my birth,
And in the field I'll seek for fame and fortune.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Thou dost not know what perils and injustice
Await the poor man's valour. O ! my son !
The noblest blood of all the land's abash'd,
Having no lacquey but pale poverty.
Too long hast thou been thus attended, DOUGLAS !
Too long hast thou been deem'd a peasant's child.
The wanton heir of some inglorious chief

I

Perhaps

Perhaps has scorn'd thee, in the youthful sports ;
 Whilst thy indignant spirit swell'd in vain !
 Such contumely thou no more shalt bear :
 But how I purpose to redress thy wrongs
 Must be hereafter told. Prudence directs
 That we should part before yon chiefs return.
 Retire, and from thy rustic follower's hand
 Receive a billet, which thy mother's care,
 Anxious to see thee, dictated before
 This casual opportunity arose
 Of private conference. Its purport mark ;
 For, as I there appoint, we meet again.
 Leave me, my son ! and frame thy manners still
 To NORVAL's, not to noble DOUGLAS' state.

NORVAL.

I will remember. Where is NORVAL now ?
 That good old man.

Lady RANDOLPH.

At hand conceal'd he lies,
 An useful witness. But beware, my son,
 Of yon GLENALVON ; in his guilty breast
 Resides a villain's shrewdness, ever prone
 To false conjecture. He hath griev'd my heart.

NORVAL.

Has he indeed ? Then let yon false GLENALVON
 Beware of me.

[Exit DOUGLAS.

Mant

A TRAGEDY.

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Manet Lady RANDOLPH.

There burst the smother'd flame!

O! thou all righteous and eternal King!
Who father of the fatherless art call'd,
Protect my son!—Thy inspiration, Lord!
Hath fill'd his bosom with that sacred fire,
Which in the breasts of his forefathers burn'd;
Set him on high like them, that he may shine
The star and glory of his native land!
Then let the minister of death descend,
And bear my willing spirit to its place.
Yonder they come. How do bad women find
Unchanging aspects to conceal their guilt?
When I, by reason, and by justice urg'd,
Full hardly can dissemble with these men
In nature's pious cause.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Yon gallant chief,
Of arms enamour'd, all repose disclaims,

Lady RANDOLPH.

Be not, my Lord, by his example sway'd;
Arrange the business of to-morrow now,
And, when you enter, speak of war no more.

[*Exit* Lady RANDOLPH.]

Manet

Manent Lord RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.

Lord RANDOLPH.

'Tis so, by heav'n! her mien, her voice, her eye,
And her impatience to be gone, confirm it.

GLENALVON.

He parted from her now: behind the mount,
Amongst the trees, I saw him glide along.

Lord RANDOLPH.

For sad, sequester'd virtue she's renown'd!

GLENALVON.

Most true, my Lord.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Yet this distinguish'd Dame

Invites a youth, the acquaintance of a day,
Alone to meet her at the midnight hour.

This assignation, [*shows a letter*] the assassin freed,
Her manifest affection for the youth,
Might breed suspicion in a husband's brain,
Whose gentle consort all for love had wedded;
Much more in mine. MATILDA never lov'd me.

— Let no man, after me, a woman wed,
Whose heart he knows he has not; tho' she brings
A mine of gold, a kingdom for her dowry,
For let her seem, like the night's shadowy queen,
Cold and contemplative; — He cannot trust her:
She may, she will, bring shame and sorrow on him;
The worst of sorrows, and the worst of shames!

GLI.

A TRAGEDY. 63

GLENALVON.

Yield not, my Lord, to such afflicting thoughts;
But let the spirit of an husband sleep,
Till your own senses make a sure conclusion.
This billet must to blooming NORVAL go:
At the next turn awaits my trusty spy;
I'll give it him refitted for his master.
In the close thicket take your secret stand;
The moon shines bright, and your own eyes may judge
Of their behaviour,

Lord RANDOLPH.

Thou dost counsel well.

GLENALVON.

Permit me now to make one slight essay.
Of all the trophies which vain mortals boast,
By wit, by valour, or by wisdom won,
The first and fairest, in a young man's eye,
Is woman's captive heart. Successful love
With glorious fumes intoxicates the mind!
And the proud conqueror in triumph moves
Air-born, exalted above vulgar men.

Lord RANDOLPH.

And what avails this maxim?

GLENALVON.

Much, my Lord!

Withdraw a little: I'll accost young NORVAL,
And with ironical derisive counsel
Explore his spirit. If he is no more
Than humble NORVAL, by thy favour rais'd,

Bravé

Brave as he is, he'll shrink astonish'd from me ;
 But if he be the fav'rite of the fair,
 Lov'd by the first of Caledonia's dames,
 He'll turn upon me, as the lion turns
 Upon the hunter's spear.

Lord RANDOLPH.

'Tis shrewdly thought.

GLENALVON.

When we grow loud, draw near. But let my Lord
 His rising wrath restrain. [Exit RANDOLPH.

Manet GLENALVON.

'Tis strange, by heav'n!
 That she should run full tilt her fond career,
 To one so little known. She too that seem'd
 Pure as the winter stream, when ice emboss'd
 Whitens its course. Even I did think her chaste,
 Whose charity exceeds not. Precious sex!
 Whose deeds lascivious pass GLENALVON's thoughts!

NORVAL appears.

His port I love ; he's in a proper mood
 To chide the thunder, if at him it roar'd.
 Has NORVAL seen the troops ?

NORVAL.

The setting sun.

With yellow radiance lighten'd all the vale,
 And as the warriors mov'd, each polish'd helm,
 Corset, or spear, glanc'd back his gilded beams.
 The hill they climb'd, and halting at its top,

A TRAGEDY.

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Of more than mortal size, tow'ring, they seem'd,
An host angelic, clad in burning arms.

GLENALVON.

Thou talk'st it well ; no leader of our host,
In sounds more lofty, speaks of glorious war.

NORVAL.

If I shall e'er acquire a leader's name,
My speech will be less ardent. Novelty
Now prompts my tongue, and youthful admiration
Vents itself freely ; since no part is mine
Of praise pertaining to the great in arms.

GLENALVON.

You wrong yourself, brave Sir ; your martial deeds
Haverank'd you with the great : but mark me, NORVAL ;
Lord RANDOLPH's favour now exalts your youth
Above his veterans of famous service.
Let me, who know the soldiers, counsel you.
Give them all honour ; seem not to command :
Else thy will scarcely brook your late sprung power,
Which nor alliance props, nor birth adorns.

NORVAL.

Sir, I have been accusom'd all my days
To hear and speak the plain and simple truth :
And tho' I have been told, that there are men
Who borrow friendship's tongue to speak their scorn,
Yet in such language I am little skill'd.
Therefore I thank GLENALVON for his counsel,
Altho' it sounded harshly. Why remind

Me

68 DOUGLAS:

Me of my birth obscure? Why slur my power
With such contemptuous terms?

GLENALVON.

I did not mean
To gall your pride, which now I see is great.

NORVAL.

My pride?

GLENALVON.

Suppress it as you wish to prosper.
Your pride's excessive. Yet for RANDOLPH's sake
I will not leave you to its rash direction.
If thus you swell, and frown at high-born men,
Will high-born men endure a shepherd's scorn?

NORVAL.

A shepherd's scorn!

GLENALVON.

Yes, if you presume
To bend on soldiers these disdainful eyes,
What will become of you?

NORVAL.

If this were told—— [*Aside.*]
Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?

GLENALVON.

Ha! Dost thou threaten me?

NORVAL.

Didst thou not hear?

GLENALVON.

Unwillingly I did; a nobler foe
Had not been question'd thus. But such as thee——

NORVAL.

A TRAGEDY.

89

NORVAL.

Whom dost thou think me?

GLENALVON.

Norval.

NORVAL.

So I am——

And who is NORVAL in GLENALVON's eyes?

GLENALVON.

A peasant's son, a wand'ring beggar-boy;
At best no more, even if he speaks the truth.

NORVAL.

False as thou art, dost thou suspect my truth?

GLENALVON.

Thy truth! thou'rt all a lie; and false as hell
Is the vain-glorious tale thou told'st to RANDOLPH.

NORVAL.

If I were chain'd, unarm'd, and bedrid old,
Perhaps I should revile: But as I am
I have no tongue rail. The humble NORVAL
Is of a race who strive not but with deeds.
Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour,
And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,
I'd tell thee—what thou art. I know thee well.

GLENALVON.

Dost thou not know GLENALVON, born to command
Ten thousand slaves like thee?

NORVAL.

Villain, no more:

Draw and defend thy life. I did design

To

To have defy'd thee in another cause:
 But heaven accelerates its vengeance on thee.
 Now for my own and Lady RANDOLPH's wrongs.

Enter Lord RANDOLPH.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Hold, I command you both. The man that first
 Makes me his foe.

NORVAL.

Another voice than thine

That threat had vainly sounded, noble RANDOLPH,

GLENALVON.

Hear him, my Lord; he's wondrous condescending!
 Mark the humility of shepherd NORVAL!

NORVAL.

Now you may scoff in safety. [*Sheaths his sword.*]

Lord RANDOLPH.

Speak not thus,

Taunting each other; but unfold to me
 The cause of quarrel, then I judge betwixt you.

NORVAL.

Nay, my good Lord, tho' I revere you much,
 My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.
 I blush to speak; I will not, cannot speak
 Th' opprobrious words that I from him have borne.
 To the liege-lord of my dear native land
 I owe a subject's homage; but even him
 And his high arbitration I'd reject.

Within

A TRAGEDY.

71

Within my bosom reigns another lord ;
Honour, sole judge and umpire of itself.
If my free speech offend you, noble RANDOLPH,
Revoke your favours, and let NORVAL go
Hence as he came, alone, but not dishonour'd.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Thus far I'll mediate with impartial voice :
The antient foe of Caledonia's land
Now waves his banners o'er her frighted fields.
Suspend your purpose, till your country's arms
Repel the bold invader ; then decide
The private quarrel.

GLENALVON.

I agree to this.

NORVAL.

And I,

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

The banquet waits.

Lord RANDOLPH.

We come.

[Exit RANDOLPH.]

GLENALVON.

Norval,

Let not our variance mar the social hour,
Nor wrong the hospitality of RANDOLPH.

Nor

Nor frowning anger, nor yet wrinkPd hate,
 Shall stain my countenance. Smooth thou thy brow
 Nor let our strife disturb the gentle Dame.

NORVAL.

Think not so lightly, Sir, of my resentment;
 When we contend again, our strife is mortal.

The End of the FOURTH ACT.

THE END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

THE END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

The End of the Fourth Act.

The End of the Fourth Act.

We come.

[The End of the Fourth Act.]

The End of the Fourth Act.

Norval.

Let not our variance mar the social hour.
 Not wrong the hospitality of Randolph.

ACT

A C T V.

*The Wood.**Enter DOUGLAS.*

THIS is the place, the centre of the grove.

Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood,
How sweet and solemn is this mid-night scene!

The silver moon, unclouded, holds her way

Thro' skies where I could count each little star.

The fanning west wind scarcely stirs the leaves;

The river, rushing o'er its pebbled bed,

Imposes silence with a still sound.

In such a place as this, at such an hour,

If ancestry can be in ought believ'd,

Descending spirits have convers'd with man,

And told the secrets of the world unknown.

Enter Old NORVAL.

NORVAL.

'Tis he. But what if he should chide me hence;

His just reproach I fear.

[DOUGLAS turns and sees him.

Forgive, forgive,

E

Canst

Canst thou forgive the man, the selfish man,
Who bred Sir MALCOLM's heir a shepherd's son.

DOUGLAS.

Kneel not to me : thou art my father still :
Thy wish'd-for presence now compleats my joy.
Welcome to me, my fortunes thou shalt share,
And ever honour'd with thy DOUGLAS live.

Old NORVAL.

And dost thou call me father ? O my son !
I think that I could die to make amends
For the great wrong I did thee. 'Twas my crime
Which in the wilderness so long conceal'd
The blossom of thy youth.

DOUGLAS.

Not worse the fruit,
That in the wilderness the blossom blow'd.
Amongst the shepherds, in the humble cote,
I learn'd some lessons, which I'll not forget
When I inhabit yonder lofty towers.
I, who was once a swain, will ever prove
The poor man's friend ; and, when my vassals bow,
NORVAL shall smoothe the crested pride of DOUGLAS.

NORVAL.

Let me but live to see thine exaltation !
Yet grievous are my fears. O leave this place,
And those unfriendly towers.

DOUGLAS.

Why should I leave them ?

NORVAL.

A TRAGEDY. 75

NORVAL.

Lord RANDOLPH and his kinsman seek your life.

DOUGLAS.

How know'st thou that?

NORVAL.

I will inform you how.

When evening came, I left the secret place
Appointed for me by your mother's care,
And fondly trod in each accustom'd path
That to the castle leads. Whilst thus I rang'd,
I was alarm'd with unexpected sounds
Of earnest voices. On the persons came;
Unseen I lurk'd, and overheard them name
Each other as they talk'd, Lord RANDOLPH this,
And that GLENALYON: still of you they spoke,
And of the Lady: threat'ning was their speech,
Tho' but imperfectly my ear could hear it.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery;
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

DOUGLAS.

Revenge! for what?

NORVAL:

For being what you are;

Sir MALCOLM's heir: how else have you offended?
When they were gone, I hied me to my cottage,
And there sat musing how I best might find
Means to inform you of their wicked purpose.
But I could think of none: at last perplex'd
I issued forth, encompassing the tower

With many a weary step and withful look.
 Now Providence hath brought you to my sight,
 Let not your too courageous spirit scorn
 The caution which I give.

DOUGLAS.

I scorn it not.

My mether warn'd me of GLENALVON's baseness;
 But I will not suspect the noble RANDOLPH.
 In our encounter with the vile assassins,
 I mark'd his brave demeanor: him I'll trust.

NORVAL.

I fear you will too far.

DOUGLAS.

Here in this place

I wait my mother's coming: she shall know
 What thou hast told: her counsel I will follow:
 And cautious ever are a mother's counsels.
 You must depart; your presence may prevent
 Our interview.

NORVAL.

My blessing rest upon thee!

O may heav'n's hand, which sav'd thee from the war,
 And from the sword of foes, be near thee still;
 Turning mischance, if ought hangs o'er thy head,
 All upon mine!

[Exit Old NORVAL.]

DOUGLAS.

He loves me like a parent;
 And must not, shall not lose the son he loves,

Altho'

Altho' his son has found a nobler father.
 Eventful day ! how hast thou chang'd my state !
 Once on the cold, and winter shaded side
 Of a bleak hill, mischance had rooted me,
 Never to thrive, child of another soil :
 Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
 Like the green thorn of May my fortune flowers.
 Ye glorious stars ! high heav'n's resplendent host !
 To whom I oft have of my lot complain'd,
 Hear and record my soul's unalter'd wish !
 Dead or alive, let me but be renown'd !
 May heav'n inspire some fierce gigantic Dane,
 To give a bold defiance to our host !
 Before he speaks it out I will accept ;
 Like DOUGLAS conquer, or like DOUGLAS die.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH.

Lady RANDOLPH.

My son ! I heard a voice——

DOUGLAS.

——The voice was mine.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Didst thou complain aloud to nature's ear,
 That thus in dusky shades, at midnight-hours,
 By stealth the mother and the son should meet ?

[Embracing him.]

DOUGLAS.

No ; on this happy day, this better birth-day,
 My thoughts and words are all of hope and joy.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Sad fear and melancholy still divide
The empire of my breast with hope and joy,
Now hear what I advise.

DOUGLAS.

First, let me tell

What may the tenor of your counsel change.

Lady RANDOLPH.

My heart forebodes some evil!

DOUGLAS.

'Tis not good.——

At eve, unseen by RANDOLPH and GLENALVON,
The good old NORVAL in the grove o'erheard
Their conversation: oft they mention'd me
With dreadful threatnings; you they sometimes nam'd.
'Twas strange, they said, a wonderful discovery:
And ever and anon they vow'd revenge.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Defend us, gracious God: we are betray'd:
They have found out the secret of thy birth;
It must be so. That is the great discovery.
Sir MALCOLM's heir is come to claim his own;
And he will be reveng'd. Perhaps even now,
Arm'd and prepar'd for murder, they but wait
A darker and more silent hour, to break
Into the chamber where they think thou sleep'st.
This moment, this, heav'n hath ordain'd to save thee!
Fly to the camp, my son!

DOUGLAS.

DOUGLAS.

And leave you here?

No: to the castle let us go together,
Call up the antient servants of your house,
Who in their youth did eat your father's bread.
Then tell them loudly that I am your son.
If in the breasts of men one spark remains
Of sacred love, fidelity, or pity,
Some in your cause will arm. I ask but few
To drive those spoilers from my father's house.

Lady RANDOLPH.

O Nature, Nature! what can check thy force?
Thou genuine offspring of the daring DOUGLAS!
But rush not on destruction: save thyself,
And I am safe. To me they mean no harm.
Thy stay but risks thy precious life in vain.
That winding path conducts thee to the river.
Cross where thou seest a broad and beaten way,
Which running eastward leads thee to the camp.
Instant demand admittance to Lord DOUGLAS.
Shew him these jewels, which his brother wore.
Thy look, thy voice, will make him feel the truth,
Which I by certain proof will soon confirm.

DOUGLAS.

I yield me and obey: but yet my heart
Bleeds at this parting. Something bids me stay
And guard a mother's life. Oft have I read
Of wondrous deeds by one bold arm achiev'd.
Our foes are two: no more: let me go forth.
And see if any shield can guard GLENALYON.

E 4

Lady

10 DOUGLAS:

Lady RANDOLPH.

If thou regard'st thy mother, or rever'st
 Thy father's mem'ry, think of this no more.
 One thing I have to say before we part;
 Long wert thou lost; and thou art found, my child,
 In a most fearful season. War and battle
 I have great cause to dread. Too well I see
 Which way the current of thy temper sets:
 To day I have found thee. Oh! my long lost hope!
 If thou to giddy valour giv'st the rein,
 To-morrow I may lose my son for ever.
 The love of thee, before thou saw'st the light,
 Sustain'd my life when thy brave father fell.
 If thou shalt fall, I have nor love nor hope
 In this waste world! my son, remember me!

DOUGLAS.

What shall I say? how can I give you comfort?
 The God of battles of my life dispose
 As may be best for you! for whose dear sake
 I will not bear myself as I resolv'd.
 But yet consider, as no vulgar name
 That which I boast sounds amongst martial men.
 How will inglorious caution suit my claim?
 The post of fate unshrinking I maintain.
 My country's foes must witness who I am.
 On the invaders heads I'll prove my birth,
 'Till friends and foes confess the genuine strain.
 If in this strife I fall, blame not your son,
 Who if he lives not honour'd, must not live.

Lady

A TRAGEDY.

Lady RANDOLPH.

I will not utter what my bosom feels.
Too well I love that valour which I warn.
Farewell, my son! my counsels are but vain.

[Embracing.]

And as high heav'n hath will'd it all must be. *[Separate.]*

Lady RANDOLPH.

Gaze not on me, thou wilt mistake the path;
I'll point it out again.

[Just as they are separating, enter from the wood

Lord RANDOLPH and GLENALVON.]

Lord RANDOLPH.

Not in her presence.

Now——

GLENALVON.

I'm prepar'd.

Lord RANDOLPH.

No: I command thee stay.

I go alone: it never shall be said
That I took odds to combat mortal man.
The noblest vengeance is the most compleat.

[Exit Lord RANDOLPH.]

*[GLENALVON makes some steps to the same side
of the stage, listens and speaks.]*

GLENALVON.

Demons of death come settle on my sword,
And to a double slaughter guide it home!
The lover and the husband both must die.

E 5

[Lord]

32 DOUGLAS.

[Lord RANDOLPH behind the scenes.]

LORD RANDOLPH.

Draw, villain! I draw.

DOUGLAS.

Affail me not, Lord RANDOLPH;

Not as thou lov'st thyself.

[Clashing of swords.]

[GLENALVON running out.]

Now is the time.

Enter Lady RANDOLPH at the opposite side of the stage, faint and breathless.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Lord RANDOLPH, hear me; all shall be thine own;
But spare! Oh spare my son!

Enter DOUGLAS with a sword in each hand.

My mother's voice!

I can protect thee still.

Lady RANDOLPH.

He lives, he lives:

For this, for this to heaven eternal praise!

But sure I saw thee fall.

DOUGLAS.

It was GLENALVON.

Just as my arm had master'd RANDOLPH's sword,
The villain came behind me; but I slew him.

Lady

A TRAGEDY

Lady RANDOLPH.

Behind thee! Ah! thou'rt wounded! O my child,
How pale thou look'st! and shall I lose thee now?

DOUGLAS.

Do not despair: I feel a little faintness;
I hope it will not last.

[Leans upon his sword.]

Lady RANDOLPH.

There is no hope!

And we must part! the hand of death is on thee!
O my beloved child! O DOUGLAS, DOUGLAS!

DOUGLAS.

Too soon we part; I have not long been DOUGLAS.
O destiny! hardly thou deal'st with me:
Clouded and hid, a stranger to myself,
In low and poor obscurity I liv'd.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Has heav'n preserv'd thee for an end like this?

DOUGLAS.

O had I fallen as my brave fathers fell,
Turning with great effort the tide of battle!
Like them I should have smil'd and welcom'd death.
But thus to perish by a villain's hand!
Cut off from nature's and from glory's course,
Which never mortal was so fond to run.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Hear justice! hear! stretch thy avenging arm.

[DOUGLAS falls.]

DOUGLAS

DOUGLAS.

Unknown I die; no tongue shall speak of me.—
Some noble spirits, judging by themselves,
May yet conjecture what I might have prov'd,
And think life only wanting to my fame:
But who shall comfort thee?

Lady RANDOLPH.

Despair! despair!

DOUGLAS.

O had it pleas'd high heaven to let me live
A little while!—my eyes that gaze on thee
Grow dim apace! my mother—O! my mother!

[Dies]

Enter Lord RANDOLPH and ANNA.

Lord RANDOLPH.

Thy words, the words of truth, have pierc'd my heart.
I am the stain of knighthood and of arms.
Oh! if my brave deliverer survives
The traitor's sword—

ANNA.

Alas! look there, my Lord!

Lord RANDOLPH.

The mother and her son! How curs'd I am!
Was I the cause? No: I was not the cause.
Yon matchless villain did seduce my soul
To frantic jealousy.

ANNA:

A TRAGEDY

ANNA.

My Lady lives:

The agony of grief hath but suppress'd
A while her powers.

Lord RANDOLPH.

But my deliverer's dead!

The world did once esteem Lord RANDOLPH well,
Sincere of heart, for spotless honour fam'd :
And, in my early days, glory I gain'd
Beneath the holy banner of the cross.
Now past the noon of life, shame comes upon me;
Reproach, and infamy, and public hate,
Are near at hand : for all mankind will think
That RANDOLPH basely stab'd Sir MALCOLM's heir.

[Lady RANDOLPH recovering.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Where am I now ? still in this wretched world !
Grief cannot break a heart so hard as mine.
My youth was worn in anguish : but youth's strength,
With hope's assistance, bore the brunt of sorrow ;
And train'd me on to be the object now,
On which Omnipotence displays itself,
Making a spectacle, a tale of me,
To awe its vassal, man.

Lord RANDOLPH.

O misery !

Amidst thy raging grief I must proclaim
My innocence.

Lady

DOUGLAS

Lady RANDOLPH.

Thy innocence!

Lord RANDOLPH.

My guilt

Is innocence compar'd with what thou think'st it.

Lady RANDOLPH.

Of thee I think not: what have I to do
With thee or any thing? My son! my son!
My beautiful! my brave! how proud was I
Of thee, and of thy valour! My fond heart
O'erflow'd this day with transport, when I thought
Of growing old amidst a race of thine,
Who might make up to me their father's childhood,
And bear my brother's and my husband's name:
Now all my hopes are dead! A little while
Was I a wife! a mother not so long!
What am I now?—I know.—But I shall be
That only whilst I please; for such a son
And such a husband make a woman bold. *[Runs out.]*

Lord RANDOLPH.

Follow her, ANNA; I myself would follow,
But in this rage she must abhor my presence.

[Exit ANNA.]

Enter Old NORVAL.

NORVAL.

I hear the voice of woe; heaven guard my child!

Lord

A TRAGEDY

Lord RANDOLPH.

Already is the idle gaping crowd,
The spiteful vulgar come to gaze on RANDOLPH.
Begone.

NOEL.

I fear thee not. I will not go.
Here I'll remain. I'm an accomplice, Lord,
With thee in murder. Yes, my fins did help
To crush down to the ground this lovely plant:
O noblest youth that ever yet was born!
Sweetest and best, gentlest and bravest spirit,
That ever blest'd the world! Wretch that I am,
Who saw that noble spirit swell and rise
Above the narrow limits that confin'd it!
Yet never was by all thy virtues won
To do thee justice, and reveal the secret,
Which, timely known, had rais'd thee far above
The villain's snare! Oh! I am punish'd now!
These are the hairs that should have strew'd the ground,
And not the locks of DOUGLAS.

*[Tears his hair, and throws himself
upon the body of DOUGLAS.]*

Lord RANDOLPH.

I know thee now: thy boldness I forgive;
My crest is fallen. For thee I will appoint
A place of rest, if grief will let thee rest.
I will reward, altho' I cannot punish.
Curst, curst GLENALVON, he escap'd too well,
Tho' slain and baffled by the hand he hated.

Foaming

88 DOUGLAS.

Foaming with rage and fury to the last,
Cursing his conqueror, the felon died.

Enter ANNA.

ANNA.

My Lord! my Lord!

Lord RANDOLPH.

Speak: I can bear of horror

ANNA.

Horror indeed!

Lord RANDOLPH.

MATILDA?

ANNA.

Is no more;

She ran, she flew like light'ning up the hill,
Nor halted till the precipice she gain'd,
Beneath whose low'ring top the river falls
Ingulph'd in rifted rocks: thither she came,
As fearless as the eagle lights upon it,
And headlong down.——

Lord RANDOLPH.

'Twas I! alas! 'twas I

That fill'd her breast with fury; drove her down
The precipice of death! Wretch that I am!

ANNA.

O had you seen her last despairing look!
Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes
Down on the deep: then lifting up her head
And her white hands to heaven, seeming to say,

Why

Why am I forc'd to this ? she plung'd herself
Into the empty air.

Lord RANDOLPH.

I will not vent,

In vain complaints, the passion of my soul.

Peace in this world I never can enjoy.

These wounds the gratitude of RANDOLPH gave.

They speak aloud, and with the voice of fate

Denounce my doom. I am resolv'd. I'll go

Straight to the battle, where the man that makes

Me turn aside must threaten worse than death.

Thou, faithful to thy mistress, take this ring,

Full warrant of my power. Let every rite

With cost and pomp upon their funerals wait :

For RANDOLPH hopes he never shall return.

F I N I S.

EPI.

EPILOGUE.

AN Epilogue I ask'd; but not one word.

*Our bard will write. He vows, 'tis most absurd
With comic wit to contradict the strain
Of tragedy, and make your sorrows vain.
Sadly he says, that pity is the best,
The noblest passion of the human breast:
For when its sacred streams the heart o'erflows,
In gushes pleasure with the tide of woe;
And when its waves retire, like those of Nile,
They leave behind them such a golden soil,
That there the virtues without culture grow,
There the sweet blossoms of affection blow.
These were his words:—void of delusive art
I felt them; for he spoke them from his heart.
Nor will I now attempt, with witty folly,
To chase away celestial melancholy.*

A G I S:

A

T R A G E D Y.

As it is ACTED at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

I N

DRURY-LANE.

P R O L O G U E

A C T I S

T R A G E D Y

T H E A T R E - R O Y A L

I N

D R U R Y - L A N E

P R O L O G U E,

Written by——

Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

*I**F in these days of luxury and ease,
A tale from Sparta's rigid state can please ;
If patriot plans a British breast can warm ;
If Kings asserting liberty can charm ;
If virtue still a grateful aspect wear ;
Check not at AGIS' fall the gen'rous tear.*

*He view'd his subjects with a parent's love ;
With zeal to save a sinking people strove ;
Strove their chang'd hearts with glory to inflame ;
To mend their morals ; and restore their name ;
Till faction rose with murder at her side ;
Then mourn'd his country ; persever'd ; and died.*

*That country once for virtue was rever'd ;
Admir'd by Greece ; by haughty Asia fear'd.
Then citizens and soldiers were the same ;
And soldiers heroes ; for their wealth was fame.
Then for the Brave the Fair reserv'd her charms ;
And scorn'd to clasp a coward in her arms.
The trumpet call'd ; she seiz'd the sword and shield ;
Array'd in haste her husband for the field ;
And sighing whisper'd in a fond embrace,
" Remember !——death is better than disgrace."
The widow'd mother shew'd her parting son
The race of glory which his fire had run.
" My son, thy flight alone I shall deplore.
" Return victorious !——or return no more !"*

While

94 P R O L O G U E.

*While beauty thus with patriot zeal combin'd,
And round the laurel'd head her myrtle wain'd;
Whilst all confess the Virtuous were the Great;
Fame, Valour, Conquest, grac'd the Spartan state.
Her Pow'r congenial with her Virtue grew,
And Freedom's banner o'er her Phalanx flew;
But soon as Virtue dropt her sickning head,
Fame, Valour, Conquest, Pow'r and Freedom fled.*

*May this sad scene improve each Briton's heart!
Rouse him with warmth to act a Briton's part!
Prompt him with Sparta's noblest sons to die;
To live in glory; and in freedom die!*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AGIS, King of Sparta,	Mr. Mossop.
LYSANDER, } Spartans.	Mr. Garrick.
AMPHARES, }	Mr. Havard.
RHESUS, } Thracians.	Mr. Holland.
EUXUS, }	Mr. Davies.

W O M E N.

AGESISTRATA, Mother of AGIS,	Mrs. Pritchard.
SANDANE, Queen to LEONIDAS, the exil'd King,	Mrs. Yates.
EVANTHE, an Athenian Lady,	Mrs. Cibber.
Senators, Ephori, Messengers.	

A G I S:

T R A G E D Y.

A C T I.

*A court and hall, common to the palaces of
the kings of SPARTA.*

Enter SANDANE attended.

HASTEN, ORONTES, to the senate-house,
And learn if rumor's voice has spoke the truth.
[Exit Attendants.]

The adverse fortune of an exil'd king
Pursues my lord. ACHAEA's generous aid
Sustains his cause in vain. Why risk a battle,
When the continuance of defensive war
Secur'd success and victory in Sparta?
Would I had never left thy splendid court,
Delightful SARDIS! to be Sparta's queen.

Enter AMPHARES.

Welcome, AMPHARES! Have the armies met?

Am:

AMPHARES.

They have. This morning, at the break of day,
 The Spartan army charg'd ACHAIA's host.
 This and no more is known. Suspense and fear
 Possess the people; to the gates they run,
 Then to their houses.: The still whisper spreads
 Thro' jussling multitudes the dread alarm.

SANDANE.

Alas! revenge and empire now depend
 On the wild issue of unruly war.
 What if the arms of AGIS should prevail?

AMPHARES.

Although he should, the toils of fate surround him.
 Dauntless and firm our brave associates stand,
 And with impatience wait the destin'd hour
 To rush on AGIS. This unlook'd for battle
 Is but a solemn prelude to the act,
 Which bold conspiracy will soon perform.
 This day shall terminate the reign of AGIS,
 And make, O Queen! all power in Sparta thine.

SANDANE.

I see that danger only whets the brave.
 But yet, AMPHARES, if my lord is vanquish'd,
 Will not the conquering army awe the city?

AMPHARES.

AGIS shall be the surety of our cause,
 And hostage for our safety, till we wrest
 The sword from proud LYSANDER, if he conquers;
 But that I fear not much. New to command

From

From idle Athens the mock herb comes,
Starts up a foldier, and a statesman too ;
Each palm he claims : All honours must adorn
The chosen friend of visionary AGIS.

SANDANE.

May Mars direct him so to guide the war,
As AGIS rules the state: And mutiny
Prove there as fatal as sedition here.

AMPHARES.

This factious state must change its feeble form,
Waver no more beneath a double reign
Of limited, contending, useless kings.
Henceforth one monarch shall in Sparta rule,
As Jove alone in high OLYMPUS reigns.

SANDANE.

So reign the mighty monarchs of the East ;
And such imperial power, I thought, belong'd
To Sparta's king, else I had ne'er been queen.
Young, and deceiv'd, I left my father's court
For Lacedæmon's miserable sceptre.
I did endeavour to extend its sway,
And to ambition rous'd my Spartan lord.
But the vain pupil of the Grecian schools,
Unprincipely AGIS, marr'd the brave design.
Chief of the multitude, idol and slave
Of the base populace, he led the herd,
He urg'd their brutal fury on the king.

AMPHARES.

And now their fury on himself recoils.

F

Like

Like the unruly elephant, they turn,
And trample down the ranks in which they fought.

SANDANE.

That is their Liberty.

AMPHARES.

Let us employ,
And then suppress, such formidable licence.
My magistracy now is near expir'd ;
A king's resentment and a rival's hate
Have long hung over my devoted head :
Farewel to place, to dignity, and power,
Whilst haughty AGIS fills the Spartan throne.
I will not live obscure in Lacedæmon,
Nor roam thro' Grecian states a banish'd man.
If I must set, to rise and shine no more,
A fiery track shall mark my setting sun.
But AGIS comes.

SANDANE.

And AGESISTRATA.

Farewel ! Success attend thee, brave AMPHARES !
I will not stay. My soul disdains to hide
Its hatred or its scorn.

[Exit SANDANE.]

AMPHARES.

Yet they who mean
To gratify these passions, must conceal them.
This day decides my fate. So let it be,
Such brief conclusion have I ever lov'd.
Assist me, Hermes, God of stratagems,
With artful words, to sooth the mind of AGIS,
And turn him from the track my purpose holds.

Exit

Enter AGIS and AGESISTRATA.

AGESISTRATA.

Alas ! my son ! that bold bad man I dread !

AGIS.

He seems to wait us. At this hour, AMPHARES,
I think that thou of all men should'st have shunn'd me.

AMPHARES.

My motive in attending here your presence
Merits a less injurious salutation.

AGIS.

I know thy merits, and I will reward them.
Art thou not author of the woes of Sparta,
Prime mover and inflamer of sedition ?
Hast thou not bent the power of thy high office
To the subversion of the state thou serv'st ?
At thee this day my indignation burns.
I am dishonour'd——

AMPHARES.

What has dishonour'd thee ?

AGIS.

Thou and thy practices : They have compell'd me
To leave the noblest station of a prince.
In time of war where should a king be found
But at his army's head ? There AGIS stood,
When you and your presumptuous Ephori
Requir'd my presence here. Ungrateful Spartans !
Had you allow'd me but one other day,

F 2

Then

Then had I fought this battle for my country,
And died or conquer'd with her bravest sons.

AGESISTRATA.

Peril, my son ! dwells not in camps alone :
In cities, palaces, and courts of justice,
With treachery and treason she inhabits,
Peril attended thus thou must encounter,
More hideous sure than in the ranks of war.

AMPHARES.

I know my actions have incens'd the king.
But I imagin'd not that such suspicions
Found entertainment in your royal breasts.

AGIS.

Hast thou not join'd the enemies of AGIS ?
Thou who wast once his friend, inconstant man.

AMPHARES.

I have oppos'd the counsel of a foe,
Whose arts depriv'd me of my prince's favour.

AGIS.

Thou hast oppos'd LYCURGUS and the laws,
Which rais'd the name of Sparta to the skies.
The Delphic God inspir'd the deep design :
For more than human was that power of thought
Which join'd the public to the private good,
With such perfection, that each selfish passion
Flow'd in the channel of the common welfare,
And, like one family of sons and fires,
And dearest brothers, a great people liv'd.
In peace they liv'd without or strife or scorn,

In

A TRAGEDY. 101

In war they fought to conquer, or to die.
 Equal and free, our happy fathers knew
 No interest but the interest of the state ;
 No gain but Sparta's glory ; proud they bore
 That palm aloft, and shar'd the high respect,
 The admiration, which consenting Greece
 Paid to th' imperial virtue of their country.

AMPHARES.

Revolving time that system overthrew,
 And chang'd the manners and the laws of Sparta.

AGIS.

The laws have been neglected, not annull'd,
 And corrupt rulers have corrupted manners.
 Authority will soon revive the laws,
 And great example yet restore the manners,
 In spite of those who have oppress'd their country,
 Depriv'd the people of their antient rights,
 And, while the nation sunk beneath their sway,
 Still strove for power in a declining kingdom,
 Still fought for wealth in an impoverish'd land.
 Even at this hour rapacious they persist,
 And, like some wretches in a stranded vessel,
 Plunder and riot in the midst of ruin.

AMPHARES.

Mov'd by the present perils of the state,
 This signal hour I chose, unknown as yet
 The fortune of the field, to change my conduct,
 And make an offer of my aid to AGIS.

F 3

AGIS.

AGIS.

If I should judge the future by the past,
Thou must forgive me, tho' I doubt thy faith.

AGESISTRATA.

Yet hear him, Agis : in an hour like this
He who assistance offers is a friend.

AGIS.

This hour may yet deceive their country's foes.
I know the base foundation of that hope
Which makes my baffled enemies presume.
LYSANDER's army in its ranks contains
The best and bravest of Laconia's sons ;
The faction wish and hope defeat to them,
That Sparta's generous youth may ne'er return
To guard that freedom which has made them brave.

AMPHARES.

The boldness of their hopes their deeds will prove
In the assembly, if Achaia conquer.

AGESISTRATA.

AMPHARES, say, what is their utmost aim ?

AMPHARES.

The old dependants of the exil'd king,
And all the venal members of the state,
Won by SANDANE's arts and foreign gold,
Aim to restore LEONIDAS, who comes
With hostile armies to enslave his country :
Therefore SANDANE's proffers I rejected,
Have warn'd the king, and would have serv'd him too :
But since resentment and distrust prevent me,

Neutral

Neutral I stand ; and will not seek that welcome
Which his more artful enemies would give.

AGIS.

Thou speak'st more boldly than becomes AMPHARES.
Add that to the offences I forgive.

It is the sacred maxim of my reign,
That in a prince's consecrated breast
Revenge and anger should not long remain.

These passions in a king afflict the state,
By driving rash offenders to despair.

This day decides your character with me.

Now let your actions prove your words sincere.

AMPHARES.

No other terms I ask, and sure I am
Ne'er shall AMPHARES need again forgiveness.

[Exit AMPHARES.]

Manent AGIS and AGESISTRATA.

AGIS.

Well has he judg'd the season of submission.
He will assist us if LYSANDER conquers.

AGESISTRATA.

May Jove avert the evils which I fear !

I dread the ruin of the Spartan state,
And fear the downfall of our antient house.

The blackest fury of the Stygian realm,
The most destructive, is infernal Discord.

Bath'd in the blood of kings she walks this world,
And tumbles states and empires to the ground.

F 4

AGIS.

AGIS.

Nations oft perish by their princes crime ;
 But now if Sparta's antient state must fall,
 Gods and good men shall witness for its king,
 That he with fate contended for his people,
 And on the ruins of their virtue fell.

AGESISTRATA.

Think not I mean to blame your high design,
 Age has not chang'd the tenor of my mind,
 Nor pall'd my admiration of true glory.
 Sprung, like thy father, from Alcides' blood,
 I feel the spirit of the Spartan line.
 Only let me adjure thee to beware
 And walk with caution thro' surrounding perils,
 Tho' thou despisest every form of danger,
 Think what a helpless train attends on thee,
 An aged mother, and an infant son.

AGIS.

Divine Alcides will protect his race.

AGESISTRATA.

I will invoke the God ; in times like these
 Prayers are the arms of our defenceless sex.
 A spotless choir of matrons and of virgins,
 Who o'er their country mourn, myself will lead
 To the high temple of the son of Jove.
 He yet may hear the voice of supplication,
 And stretch his arm to save the Spartan state.

[Exit AGESISTRATA.

AGIS.

Without, the enemy ; within, the faction.
 What shou'd I think ? I have a thousand thoughts
 That rise and fall like waves upon the shore.
 I need thee now, **LYSANDER** ! O my friend !
 I lean on thee, and thou perhaps art fall'n.
 Ye ever-living Gods, who know my heart,
 I trust in you, for righteous are my thoughts,
 All bent on raising up long-prostrate Sparta.
 With Sparta too, I would be proud to rise,
 And gain such glory as my fathers gain'd,
 When Persia's tyrant trembled at their arms.
 If in this just ambition I should perish,
 My name shall go to nations yet unborn.
 But I must change my strain : **EUANTHE** comes.
 Alas ! **LYSANDER**, led by love and thee,
 She left her Athens for this land of broils.

Enter EUANTHE.

EUANTHE.

No tidings from the camp ?

AGIS.

None, fair **EUANTHE**.

If we had lost the field, the flying rout
 Ere this had reach'd our gates.

EUANTHE.

Oh ! many a dame,
 Matron and virgin, tremble at this hour ;

But who has cause like mine? The most forlorn
And desolate of women is EVANTHE.
If——

AGIS.

Small the chance of what EVANTHE fears:
In the long wars of still-contending Greece
Leaders of armies have but rarely fallen.

EVANTHE.

One thing I know, and with prophetic tongue
I speak it, Prince! if Sparta triumph not,
Ne'er shall your eyes again behold LYSANDER,
Disdain in him is fatal as despair.

AGIS.

When he returns victorious from the field,
Then shall he hear who best has spoke his praise.
But I must leave you now: The senate waits me.
Hereafter we shall speak of this, and smile
Like mariners who on the peaceful shore
Sit, and with pleasure talk of tempests past.

[Exit AGIS.]

EVANTHE *alone*.

This steadfast ease is all assum'd, I see;
He staggers at the imminent event.
How dreadful is this interval to me,
Who am bereft and destitute of all
Those aids that stay affliction; and must bear
The weight of woe that's heavier every hour.
The queen, and generous AGIS too, discharge
The dues of kindred with unfeigned love.

But

But our acquaintance is not old enough
 To yield a ripen'd sympathy, whose taste
 Alone can comfort such a mind as mine.
 Yet I repent me not, in this extreme,
 That I forsook my country and my friends.
 They would have forc'd me to a loathed bed,
 And torn me from the noblest of mankind.
 If he should fall ! my love ! my only love !
 Shall I survive thee ; and return to Athens,
 Be humbled there before my haughty kindred,
 And hear them blame the ashes of **LYSANDER** ?
 Forbid it, fearless love ! forbid it, shame !
 Forbid it, honour, and my nature's pride !
 Death shall forbid it, for I dare to die.

Enter RHESUS.

EUANTHE.

RHESUS, great Gods ! Oh say, how fares **LYSANDER** ?

RHESUS.

As well as glorious victory can make him.

EUANTHE.

Forgive my rash despair, my thanks accept,
 Ye gracious powers who guard his daring breast,
 Where is he now ?

RHESUS.

With **AEGES** in the senate.

EUANTHE.

Already here ; blest be the Gods of Greece !

F 6

RHESUS.

RHESUS.

Soon as the trumpet from pursuit recall'd
Our conquering Spartans, in the field arriv'd
A weary messenger, by AGIS sent ;

LYSANDER straight bespoke the royal band :

" With all the speed of men to Sparta haste,
" Chastise bold treason, and defend your king."

He said ; and call'd to me. With a few horse
I follow'd him : And when he fought the king,
By his command to you I brought these tidings.

EUANTHE.

Most welcome RHESUS. But has Sparta lost
None of her noble youth ?

RHESUS.

No man of note
Fell in the field but one, whose loss you'll mourn,
LYSANDER's friend, Athenian POLYDORUS.

EUANTHE.

Alas ! alas ! my joy is mix'd with woe.
Unhappy youth ! on my ill-omen'd head
The blame of thy untimely death will fall.
Conducting me, thou cam'st to distant Sparta.
Fatal the honours Sparta's king bestow'd
Upon the generous guardian of EUANTHE.

RHESUS.

Lady, the people of my native land,
The warlike Thracians, hold it vain to mourn
For men who fall in battle ; such they deem
The favourites of MARS, our country's God.

Those

Those they bewail who die by dire disease,
Of youth and vigour full. But most of all
Lament old men, who drink the bitter draught
Of life and woe, and in decrepit age
(Extremity of dotage) wish to live.

EUANTHE.

Who are these men who near the temple stand?
Uncouth to me their garb, and strange their arms.

RHESUS.

They are Thracians, lady.

EUANTHE.

What seek they here?

RHESUS.

I will accost the herald,

And learn his business.

EUANTHE.

To the palace, RHESUS.

I go the willing messenger of joy.

This victory will free the anxious Queen

From many fears. I pray thee do not tarry,

But come and tell me what yon herald bears,

And what affairs still occupy the senate.

RHESUS.

Depend on the unwearied zeal of RHESUS.

[Exit RHESUS.]

Manet EUANTHE.

AGIS and Sparta, and the public cares,

Detain LYSANDER from my longing eyes.

I see the happy change of my condition,

And

And share the triumphs of the man I love.
But yet the slightest circumstance creates
New fears to me. Why lingers thus LYSANDER!
My mind is not at rest; the winds are hush'd,
But still my bosom quivers from the storm.

[Exit EUANTHE.]

The End of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

A TRAGEDY. 111

ACT II.

EUANTHE.

THEIR tedious council now is at an end,
And surely he will hasten to EUANTHE.
What means this clamour?

[Shout of the People behind the Scenes.]

Ha! he comes, he comes!

Loud acclamations and the voice of joy
Proclaim the hero.

Enter LYSANDER.

LYSANDER.

O my life! my love!

To meet thee here is happiness compleat.
The Gods have blest me to my utmost wish,
And brought me full of glory to EUANTHE.

EUANTHE.

Thanks to the Gods who have preserv'd LYSANDER.
Athenian Pallas sure has heard my prayers.

LYSANDER.

And mine; for mutual is the lovers' prayer.
Another deity I now invoke,
Whose rites the God of war has long delay'd,

With

With peace well-pleas'd shall golden Hymen come,
And crown at last our long eventful love.

EUANTHE.

Speak not of Hymen now : his torch for me
He shall not light, whilst cruel Discord waves
Her horrid brand, and whilst unburied lies
Thy friend and mine, the generous POLYDORUS.

LYSANDER.

Tho' love and glory both my breast inspire,
And fortune smiles on both, yet sorrow finds
A place to sit in : but 'tis temper'd sorrow ;
For never Grecian hero greater died.

EUANTHE.

He fell the victim of his love to thee ;
He follow'd thee when thou forsook'st EUANTHE,
Left me that day I touch'd the Spartan shore,
Tho' royal AGIS begg'd thee to remain.

LYSANDER.

Unjust EUANTHE, thus to blame LYSANDER
Who fought the field, the soldier of his love
As of his sacred country : fought to gain,
With liberty, a rank and place of honour,
Such as becomes the husband of EUANTHE ;
That tender name, and names that wait upon it,
Awake emotions as implacable
To tyranny, as generous and great,
As ever self-renouncing hero own'd.
When the chief aim is right, all passions else
Of noble kind impell the self-same way.

The

The lover and the husband rouse and fire
The Spartan and the man.
Of common clay, and in one common mold
Mankind are made; but the celestial fire
That gives them life and soul, is liberty.
And I, Prometheus-like, to gain that fire
For Sparta's sons, would brave the bolt of Jove.

EUANTHE.

To me you need not vaunt your daring mind.
Alas! LYSANDER! I am still afraid
Of perils lurking in this troubled state.
O leave me not again to grief and fear,
And to AMPHARES.

LYSANDER.

Leave thee to AMPHARES!

EUANTHE.

Yes, in thy absence he did talk of love,
Boasted his wealth, his clients, and his power;
Mention'd the ruin of thy father's fortunes,
And spoke contemptuous of thy rash designs.

LYSANDER.

Immortal Gods! Did I not hate this man
Enough?

Enter a HELOT.

Whence, HELOT?

HELOT.

Lord, from Celimene.

(Delivers a Letter.)

LYSANDER.

LYSANDER. (*reads.*)

*Let AGIS stand upon his guard to day,
This to LYSANDER from a faithful friend,—*
Helot, return, and tell the noble dame
That the remembrance of her generous mind
Shall live for ever in my grateful breast.

EUANTHE.

Who is this faithful friend?

LYSANDER.

A Spartan dame,

A gentle one, tho' wedded to a foe
Of royal AGIS. In her virgin state
She was the constant and the lov'd companion
Of fair DEIDAMIA, AGIS' short-liv'd queen.
Thro' all our various strife, the generous dame
Preserves the friendships of her early days.
This scroll the King must see. Farewel, EUANTHE.

EUANTHE.

Its threatening strain awakes my former fears.
Wou'd you had been, like me, content with love,
And never left Illysius' flowery banks!
A fairer garland there you might have won,
Than ever war bestow'd, the immortal wreath
Of PALLAS, queen of arts as well as arms.
But you forsook the vale, and left the shade
To climb ambition's bare and rocky height,
To stand the storms and tempests of the world.

LYSANDER.

Your words, like melancholy music, take

My

A TRAGEDY. 115

My list'ning ear, and cause delusive sadness ;
For vain the malice of our baffled foes,
And impotent will prove their last endeavours ;
Past are the storms and tempests of our fortune ;
Let not EUANTHE heed the rack of clouds,
Nor dread the murmurs of the falling main.

EUANTHE.

Elate with victory, you scorn your foes.
I wish that RHESUS would return again
Before you go to AGIS.

LYSANDER.

Where is RHESUS ?

EUANTHE.

I saw some warriors clad in horrid arms
Near yonder temple stand. Strait RHESUS knew
The garb and arms of his own native Thrace,
And, wond'ring at the sight, went forth to learn
Who and from whence they were.

LYSANDER.

That shall be known.

In yonder temple sit the Ephori,
Those factious magistrates who love not AGIS.
If RHESUS come to you, detain him not ;
Our resolutions may on him depend.

EUANTHE.

LYSANDER, stay ; you go again to AGIS,
Perhaps to plan new perils to thy life ;
If so, by all that's sacred I conjure thee
To let me know your purpose. Speak with me

Before

Before you execute what you resolve.
 The image of the stern AMPHARES haunts me;
 Need I intreat thee to defend me from him.

LYSANDER.

No! by the Gods! O urge me not EVANTHE!
 Nor rouse those thoughts a lover cannot bear.
 Defend thee from AMPHARES! O my fair!
 When thou art wrong'd, LYSANDER lives no more!
 But see the King.

EVANTHE.

Let caution shew your love.

LYSANDER goes off towards that side
 of the stage where AGIS appears.

Manet EVANTHE.

If nature teaches me aright to read
 The mind of man, this is a powerful spell
 To charm the daring spirit of LYSANDER,
 And make him think of me as well as Sparta.

[Exit EVANTHE.]

Enter AGIS.

LYSANDER.

Regard, O king, the warnings of a friend
 Instructed in the counsels of thy foes.
 Behold the stedfast faith of CELIMENE.

[Gives the letter.]

AGIS.

I cannot think so basely of the people.
 For them I have unplum'd the regal power,

And

A T R A G E D Y. 117

And deck'd their freedom with the spoils of kings.
 If they betray me ; of all creatures, man
 Is most ungrateful to his benefactor.
 The generous courser and the faithful dog
 With true affection love their gentle master ;
 Nay even the heavy ox, the stubborn mule,
 Dullest of beasts, they know the hand that feeds them.

LYSANDER.

Humanity lives in thy breast, O king !
 And dictates confidence unlimited ;
 Virtue approves the generous extreme,
 And magnanimity this error loves.
 Let private men indulge the glorious fault,
 And set their lives and fortunes on the faith
 And gratitude of those they have oblig'd ;
 But let severer prudence guard the heart
 Of him whose brows are circled with a crown.

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

O King ! the captain of Amycla's gate
 Informs you that he has this hour descried
 A band of men who halted near his post ;
 A thousand Thracians, they report themselves,
 Hir'd by AMPHARES for SELEUCUS' service.

AGIS.

A thousand Thracians !

OFFICER.

On their march to Sardis.

LYSANDER.

LYSANDER.

By whose permission do they march this way?

OFFICER.

Before the troops arriv'd, a herald came

Who to the Ephori a message bore.

AGIS.

Your diligence in duty I commend.

Exit OFFICER.

LYSANDER.

The veil's withdrawn, and treason stands reveal'd.

Ne'er shall AMPHARES need again forgiveness.

With what a double tongue the traitor spoke!

All-seeing Gods! how little do we know

The greatness of those blessings you confer.

Had we not fought to day, had we not conquer'd,

AGIS and Sparta had been lost for ever.

AGIS.

This victory came like the bolt of Jove,

And levell'd their designs.

LYSANDER.

Yet if they dare

The worst of crimes, their treason may succeed.

Your troops, your conquering troops, are not arriv'd;

Th' assembly meets; unguarded there you stand;

What keeps the traitors from your noble life?

AGIS.

My life! LYSANDER. No, I fear not that.

The antient annals of this land record,

Tha

That barbarous foes revere the race divine,
And turn in battle from a Spartan king.

LYSANDER.

The multitude may still revere their lord
Who from the blood of great Alcides springs;
And yet some impious hand may strike the prince,
Altho' of virtue as of race divine.

AGIS.

I'll change the guards, and place at ev'ry gate
Some men of trust.

LYSANDER.

Mount your Thessalian steed,
And meet the troops that hasten to your aid.
With eager steps the royal band advance,
And wish for nothing but their king to lead them.
Then if the furies in their wrath provoke
Your foes to rise in arms, let arms decide.
Ne'er were the good and bad winnow'd so well,
And sever'd from each other. Such the hosts,
And such will be their fate, as when the rage
Of earth-born giants dar'd the sons of heaven.

AGIS.

Thou reason'st like an anxious friend, LYSANDER.
Thy fears are all for me, mine for my people.

Enter RHEUS.

Hail, gallant RHEUS; know'st thou ought of those
Thy countrymen, who thus unlook'd-for come,
And in a doubtful hour perplex our councils.

RHESUS.

The Thracians are a thousand men compleat.
From snowy Hemus and the northern hills
Of wild Odryfus the fierce warriors come.

RHINALCES leads them, of illustrious birth;
But, stern, imperious, and grown old in arms,
He knows no umpire but the sword, no law
Except obedience to the prince he serves.

AGIS.

Such oft are those that quit a needy home
To serve as hirelings in a tyrant's host.

RHESUS.

Next in command, my brother EUXUS stands,
A Youth to MARS devoted; for he loves
Danger itself, not danger's rich reward.

LYSANDER.

Hast thou yet seen him?

RHESUS.

No.

LYSANDER.

Has he yet heard

That thou art here in Sparta?

RHESUS.

He believes

That I am still in Athens. From the herald
I kept my name and quality conceal'd;
For I suspected that these Thracian troops,
Though hir'd for Asia, were for Sparta meant.
If it prove so, I may be useful here:

My valiant brother bears a generous mind,
And, tho' of arms enamour'd, justice loves.

AGIS.

Haste to your valiant brother, and explain,
With an impartial tongue, the state of Sparta.
Shew him where justice, and where honour stand.
If these are sacred, as thou say'st they are,
The gallant Euxus, he may prove a friend.

LYSANDER.

Exert the strong persuasion of a brother;
And tell him, RHESUS, if he loves bright arms,
And that immortal glory valour gains,
No more to wield a mercenary sword,
But plant himself with thee in Sparta's soil,
Where AGIS will his noble nature cherish,
And rear his courage to such lofty deeds,
As antient story tells of Sparta's chiefs. [*Exit RHESUS.*]

AGIS.

I hope that RHESUS will divide the Thracians:
This favours well the bias of my mind,
Averse to leave the city on suspicion,
And drive the wavering faction to extremes.

LYSANDER.

O generous prince! whom I admire and blame,
The greatest foe, the foe LYSANDER dreads
Is the unequal'd gentleness of Agis.
Review the story of the Grecian states,
And mark how freedom fell in every land.
The brave asserters of the public cause

G

Have

Have ever been too mild in evil times;
 Have, like indulgent parents, spar'd the rod,
 And let the vices of their children live
 To kill the virtues. Hence, let AGIS learn
 The only lesson that his nature needs.

AGIS.

Uncertain is the peril if I stay,
 But certain is the evil if I fly.
 I will remain; but to assure my safety,
 You must, LYSANDER, to the troops return.

LYSANDER.

And leave my prince alone amidst his foes!—
 Revoke the hard command if you're resolv'd
 To brave the peril, then my place I claim
 Next to your person; by your side I stand;
 Perhaps some noble service I may render,
 Receive the mortal wound aim'd at my prince,
 And with my life redeem the life of AGIS.

AGIS.

Your great imagination's up in arms;
 But hear me, and let calmer reason judge.
 I am determin'd not to quit the city,
 The guilt of civil war shall not be mine.

LYSANDER's presence here without the troops
 Would but embolden and excite my foes,
 Who may be tempted by this fair occasion,
 This mighty vantage, to surprize us both.
 Without delay, once more, LYSANDER, arm,
 And ostentatiously pass through the gate.

This

A TRAGEDY. 123

This victory, and the approaching host
Will hush the threatned storm.

LYSANDER.

So may it prove.

But there is something in my heart rebels
Against this counsel! Oh! I cannot leave you—
Nor ought I now to stay. Let every man
Say in the morning that the day's his own:
Things past belong to memory alone;
Things future are the property of hope.
The narrow line, the isthmus of these seas,
The instant scarce divisible, is all
That mortals have to stand on. O my prince!
LYSANDER leaves you with a heavy heart.

AGIS.

Farewel, thou Spartan of the antient mould,
Dear as the brother of his blood to AGIS!

[They embrace and part.]

LYSANDER!

LYSANDER.

Ha! may heaven your purpose change!

AGIS.

My will is fix'd. But though my judgment too
Confirms the secret counsel of my heart,
Yet I may be deceiv'd; perhaps, my friend,
We part this moment ne'er to meet again.

LYSANDER.

Let us not part at all. 'Tis inspiration,
The guardian God, the Demon of the mind,
Thus often presses on the human breast.

G 2

AGIS.

AGIS.

Mistake me not, I feel no new impression,
 Nor if I did, should I by that be alter'd;
 For such prefages, be they sad or joyful,
 I deem them but the meteors of the mind,
 Bred by the inward elemental strife,
 When great events perplex and shake the soul.
 My thoughts regard the state. If I should fall,
 To thee, *LYSANDER*, I commit my son,
 The only pledge of my *DEIDAMIA*'s love.
 Train up the boy to walk in the same path
 Which we have trod together, the freight path
 Of virtue and true glory. If he proves
 Of noble nature, and I hope no less,
 He will not shun the lofty path of honour,
 Tho' fate should mark it with his father's blood.

LYSANDER.

Hear this, immortal Gods! who rule the world,
 And guard a prince the image of yourselves!
 O never, never may his royal race
LYSANDER's aid require. [*Exit* *LYSANDER*.]

AGIS alone.

Affection choaks his words;

His generous heart bursts at this solemn parting,
 In times like these of a declining state,
 Baseness infects the general race of men;
 But yet these trying times rear up a few
 More excellent, refin'd and conscious spirits,
 More principled, and fit for all events,
 Than any in the good, but equal, mass.

Of

A TRAGEDY. 125

Of a far better age. Such is LYsANDER.
The hour draws near.

Enter SENATORS.

SENATORS.

Assembled Sparta waits.

AGIS.

I come, my friends ! I will address the people,
Proclaim aloud mine actions which upbraid,
And soon shall silence, my despicable foes.
My heart shall speak. This sceptre of my fathers,
By long descent hereditary mine,
I would disdain to hold, did I not hope,
That by its sway I might recall those days
When Lacedæmon was the pride of Greece,
The gaze and terror of the wondring world :
For there, as in a chosen temple, dwell
Valour and virtue, whilst attending fame
And glory on the land of heroes shone.

First SENATOR.

O Gods above ! how happy were our fires,
In those bright days of antient glory born.

AGIS.

Those days shall yet return, Olympian Jove !
Or low in dust shall Spartan AGIS lie.

[Sound of musical instruments.]

First SENATOR.

What means this musick ?

G 3

AGIS.

AGIS.

To the Gods of Greece

- And Sparta's guardian deities it sounds.

Let us begone, nor stop the holy train.

*Exeunt.**Enter a Procession.*AGESISTRATA, EVANTHE, *Priests of JUPITER and*
HERCULES.

CHORUS of Matrons and Virgins.

Woes approach till now unknown;
Discord shakes the Spartan throne.
Heav'n avert the ills we fear!
Jove, from high Olympus, hear!

Priests of JUPITER.

This day our foes embattled came,
And vow'd to end the Spartan name:
Embattled near our gates they fought;
But Jove for us deliverance wrought.
He smote Achaia's host with fear,
He thunder'd in their trembling rear;
Jove's lightning flam'd from Sparta's spear.

CHORUS of Matrons and Virgins.

Ever may his mighty arm
Save the Spartan state from harm!
Ne'er may proud invader boast
Glory from our glory lost.
Light, O Jove, that sacred fire
Which did Sparta's sons inspire,

Len

A T R A G E D Y. 117

When the prince and people strove,
 Burning with their country's love.
 Xerxes, lord of great alarms,
 Xerxes rous'd the world to arms.

Priests of JUPITER.

The earth was troubled at his host,
 The springs were dried, the rivers lost;
 But Spartan valour check'd his pride,
 A slender band his host defy'd:
 Thermopylæ (immortal name!)
 Beheld the Persian tyrant's shame.

CHORUS of all.

There the brave three hundred dy'd,
 Faithful, by their prince's side:
 There they conquer'd, tho' they dy'd.

Priests of HERCULES.

On earth below, in Heav'n above,
 Rever'd, victorious, son of Jove!
 Hear, Alcides, hear our prayer,
 Thy godlike offspring claims thy care.

CHORUS of all.

Bend thy bow, Tyrinthius, bend,
 Lightly on the earth descend.
 Fix an arrow on the string,
 Stand beside the Spartan king,
 Agis of thy race divine,
 Tried in labours like to thine.

Undaunted, like thee, with monsters he strives;
 The fiercest of Hydras in faction revives.

If he falls a sacrifice,
Never more shall Sparta rise!

[*Exeunt.*] *As the procession goes of*

Enter AMPHARES.

Thus may my pious foes for ever strive,
Be theirs the airy aid of fabled Jove.
In nearer and more certain force I trust:
Of human race, I fight with mortal arms.
Yet prais'd be Fortune, goddess of my vows,
'Tis she whose happy hand leads forth these dames;
Ne'er to the palace shall their steps return.
The net I've spread now covers all my foes,
Except LYSANDER: O had he been here!
Then I had stood, like mighty Atlas, firm;
Fate but reserves him to another day.
The time is almost come; my Thracians now
Have reach'd their post; and many a daring eye
Looks for the signal. Here it is—my sword.
When I appear thus arm'd, the furies rise;
This is the comet, the fierce blazing star,
On which commotion, change, and death attend.

[*Exit AMPHARES.*]

The End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

Enter EUANTHE.

A THENIAN Pallas ! O my native Gods !
 Protect your suppliant in a foreign land,
 Where shall I fly ? O AGIS ! O LYSANDER !

Enter LYSANDER in a HELOT's garb.

HELOT, if pity, or if gold——

LYSANDER.

EUANTHE !

EUANTHE.

O Hear'n and earth ! LYSANDER !

LYSANDER.

Yes, my love !

Thou see'st LYSANDER, miserable man !

Does AGIS live ?

EUANTHE.

Amidst the clash of arms,

And cries of fighting men, I heard them shout

The name of AGIS. By-and-by a Spartan,

Flying and wounded, as he pass'd call'd out,

"The king is safe ; the king has gain'd the temple."

LYSANDER.

Then all is safe ; for Sparta lives in him.

G 5

EUANTHE.

EUANTHE.

But the good Queen!

LYSANDER.

Her sex, her age protects her.

EUANTHE.

Heaven grant they may; an impious band in arms
Pursu'd the holy train. Fear gave me speed,
For I outstript them all. But now, LYSANDER,
Betray'd, encompass'd, now what shall we do?

LYSANDER.

Wert thou but safely plac'd, LYSANDER knows
What he should do. I must not tarry here.
There is a temple in this spacious city,
For sanctity above all others fam'd,
To Juno sacred, the avenging Queen!
Thither a trusty slave of AGIS' house
Will guide thy steps; by my command he waits
Without the palace.

EUANTHE.

Whither dost thou go?

LYSANDER.

In this inglorious garb disguis'd, I wait
Till night and darkness come; then I attempt
The wall, where'er I find it slightly guarded.
What mortal arm shall then oppose my way,
Urg'd as I am? Alas, my lov'd EUANTHE!
From my compliance with thy fond request
Springs the worst evil of this dreadful hour.
I have betray'd the confidence of AGIS:
But I'll repair my fault.

EUANTHE.

A TRAGEDY. 131

EUANTHE.

What dost thou mean?

LYSANDER.

AGIS commanded me to leave the city,
And thinks, would to the Gods he thought aright!
That his LYSANDER heads the Spartan troops,
In whom his only hope of safety lies.
But I, EUANTHE! partial to thy will,
Sought thee in vain. In that unhappy time
They seiz'd the gates, and shut me up in Sparta.
Fate punishes with too severe a doom
The human weakness of indulgent love.
AGIS! I come!—For the deep voices now
Of duty, friendship, gratitude, and glory,
Sound thro' my breast, and from my beating heart
Their echo rings. Farewel! my love, farewel!

EUANTHE.

Not yet, LYSANDER! AGIS is oppress,
And Sparta too. Does duty, or does honour,
Require LYSANDER, like an eastern slave,
To fall attendant on the royal pile?
What can you do? The army will betray you:
So with the few, the faithful few that love you,
You'll do some desperate action, and be slain.
If you despise your life, yet think of me,
The prey of curst AMPHARES.

LYSANDER.

Infernal Gods!

Let me not think of that. Retire, EUANTHE,

And in the hallow'd temple rest secure.
 This night I'll force ill-guarded Sparta's gates,
 And save my prince, my country, and EVANTHE.

EVANTHE.

Thy prince, thy country are already lost.
 O listen, and preserve thyself and me:
 The ship that bore me to the Spartan shore
 Rides still at anchor: leave this wretched land.
 Where'er thou goest I will attend thy steps;
 Thy gods shall be my gods; thy people, mine.

LYSANDER.

Alas! EVANTHE does not see the shame,
 The ruin of that counsel love inspires.
 Th' eternal gods repose this hour in me
 No common trust: Upon my deeds depend
 The fate of AGIS, and the fate of Sparta.
 My soldiers too, my brave, my faithful soldiers,
 The meanest warrior of the royal band
 Freely devotes his life to godlike AGIS.
 And shall their leader, shall the friend of AGIS,
 Forsake his prince? I will forget thy words;
 Repeat them not.

EVANTHE.

Is this LYSANDER's love?
 Must I not speak? Is my reward reproach?
 For you I left my friends and native land,
 Defy'd all danger, and all censure scorn'd;
 Now in my sore distress I call on thee
 For whom I suffer, to protect my honour,

And

And in my sore distress dost thou upbraid me?

If ever maid, like credulous EUANTHE,

Bursts all the bonds of nature for one man,

Let her beware that he be not a Spartan!

O wretched maid! O Athens lost in vain!

[Ready to faint]

LYSANDER.

All-ruling powers! why am I thus distressed?

Why come calamities so thick upon me?

EUANTHE, hear me; you shall be obey'd.

I'll bear thee hence, and go with thee to Athens,

Restore thee to thy country and thy friends,

Of whom thou dost complain I have bereft thee.

LYSANDER will acquit himself to thee,

And to mankind——

EUANTHE.

Delude me not. Alas!

Thy tongue speaks comfort; but thy voice, thy looks,

Wild and unsettled, drive me to despair:

For thou, methinks, art desperate, LYSANDER.

Those lips that quiver, and those eyes that roll

Like dragon's eyes, those are not signs of love!

Thou say'st that thou wilt bear me back to Athens;

Will that acquit thee, if thou leav'st me there?

Is that thy purpose?

LYSANDER.

Yes. I'll leave the world,

And death shall wipe dishonour from my name:

Acis and Sparta shall forgive me then,
And every debt be paid.

EUANTHE.

LYSANDER, no.

Love's victims are not of your sterner sex.
It is the destiny of womankind
Constant to live, and desolate to die.
To strong necessity **EUANTHE** yields—
If I should tear you from the side of **AGIS**,
I see my fate; you ne'er would love me more:
Tho' you should live, yet you would die to me.
But I will rather stay and perish here
Than live without thee. Go, and fight for **AGIS**;
But in the hour of danger think of me!
Calm in the rear direct the course of battle,
The dreadful van let other warriors lead,
In whom nor **AGIS** nor **EUANTHE** lives.

LYSANDER.

These words become my idoliz'd **EUANTHE**!
And honour now approves the voice of love.
O thou first object of my young desires,
And thro' each period of my ripening years
Still more maturely and intensely lov'd,
Hear and believe my words.—Beware—Beware.

Enter **AMPHARES.**

[*To his people.*]

'Tis she, by Venus! halt. Fear not, my fair,
Nor meditate escape from your **AMPHARES**.

EUANTHE,

A TRAGEDY. 135

EVANTHE.

My AMPHARES!

AMPHARES.

Thine, and thine alone!

Thou low'ring slave, begone! Haste! urge me not
To stain my sword with thy ignoble blood.

[Exit LYSANDER.]

EVANTHE.

Is this thy love? Imperious, and in arms,
Recent from blood and treason, dost thou come,
To take by force and violence my heart?

AMPHARES.

The love of thee, more powerful than ambition,
Inflam'd me to attempt the Spartan throne.
Thy beauty is the torch that lights the war:
For thee I conquer—Smile not thus in scorn,
Deign to accept my hand and Sparta's crown.

EVANTHE.

Dost thou bestow the diadem of Sparta?
Where is thy lawful prince?

AMPHARES.

LEONIDAS?

EVANTHE.

AGIS.

AMPHARES.

That AGIS is no more a king;
A suppliant, surrounded by my troops,
In Juno's temple, with the priests he dwells.
LEONIDAS, by me restor'd to power,

Will

Will gladly share with me divided empire.
 Or, if I please to reign alone, I may.
 Thro' dark conspiracy and open strife,
 For thee I strive; thou wilt reward my love.
 Beauty, like thine, pertains not to the vanquish'd,
 But still triumphant reigns the victor's queen.

EUANTHE.

Think'st thou there is no truth in human breasts,
 No faithful loyalty, no constant love?
 Soon shalt thou learn thine error. I begin
 To teach thee first. Thee and thy love I scorn!
 And may the gods reward thy base ambition
 As I reward thy love.

AMPHARES.

O womankind!
 How well your passions teach us to be just!
 You love LYSANDER still; a little time
 Will from your mind erase the memory
 Of that vain-glorious, lost, and ruin'd man,
 Who was my rival.

EUANTHE.

Was! whate'er he was
 He is, and more. Thou and thy crimes contribute
 To make him more illustrious, more belov'd,
 Thou giv'st him scope and vantage to his virtue.
 Speak'st thou of crowns whilst royal AGAS reigns?
 Of power in Sparta whilst LYSANDER lives?
 The short dominion of this day is thine,
 But vengeance and LYSANDER come to morrow.

Am.

A TRAGEDY. 137

AMPHARES.

Thou do'st instruct me. If my time is short,
We should not part. I'll see thee safely plac'd
Where I command.

EUANTHE.

I will not go with thee.

AMPHARES.

Yield to necessity; for on my call
Compulsion waits. No other hand than mine
Should touch EUANTHE.

[Seizes her hand.]

EUANTHE.

Help, Spartans! help!

If any hear me who regard LYSANDER.

*Enter LYSANDER with a dagger, and
runs at AMPHARES, who retires.*

AMPHARES.

Affist me, friends. Surround him—'Tis LYSANDER.
Take him alive.

[To his people who enter.]

LYSANDER.

No. That they cannot, traitor!

[Snatches a sword from one of the soldiers.]

Now I am better arm'd.

AMPHARES.

Kill him, Euxus,

Unless he yield his sword.

LYSANDER.

LYSANDER.

Come, brave AMPHARES!
Come to the front, and there direct my fate.

AMPHARES.

Kill him!

EUXUS.

That would dishonour me for ever.
Advance on all sides, and close in upon him.

LYSANDER.

Strangers, give way, and let the Spartan chiefs
Fight their own quarrels. I will give you all
The wealth of Sparta.

AMPHARES.

Ha! he grows upon them!
Throw down your weapons, or I'll pierce her heart!

[Points his sword to EVANTHE'S breast.]

EUXUS.

Renown'd LYSANDER! give thy sword to EUXUS.

EVANTHE.

Defend thy noble life! Regard not mine.

[AMPHARES lifts his sword.]

LYSANDER.

Hold, hold.

AMPHARES.

Thou know'st me.—Chuse.

LYSANDER.

I cannot bear to see EVANTHE die!

[Throws down his sword.]

O AGIS! O my prince!

Am

A T R A G E D Y. 139

AMPHARES.

Victorious chief,
Statesman and soldier, learned Athens' boast,
Where are thy glories now?

LYSANDER.

The strife of tongues
I shun, as thou didst shun the strife of arms.

AMPHARES.

Yet let thy haughtiness grant one request.
Tell me what brought the great LYSANDER hither?
Some stratagem profound; which none but he
Could have contriv'd to hasten his destruction,
And add disgrace and ridicule to ruin.

LYSANDER.

Had'st thou not fled, thou coward, from my sword,
And shriek'd for help, this arm, this single arm,
Had baffled all the craft of false AMPHARES.

AMPHARES.

This pride becomes thee, and thy lost condition.

LYSANDER.

In this condition it becomes me best
To brave AMPHARES. Had he been a captive
I should have pitied him.

AMPHARES.

Plead'st thou for pity?

LYSANDER.

For none that thou canst give. Hear me, then judge,
If what I speak is meant to win thy favour.
I should have pitied thee by fate subdued:

Opprest

Opprest with crimes, thy spirit would have shrunk
 Under calamity, and guilt have marr'd
 The noble vigor and the port of manhood.
 Amidst thy triumph, does it not confound thee,
 To think thou ow'st it to excess of baseness?
 Thou hast prevail'd, because the generous Agis
 Would not believe there could be such a traitor.

AMPHARES.

Oft have I heard, and often seen thy folly;
 But now to rail is madness. With one word
 I could impose on thee eternal silence.

LYSANDER.

And would—I know thee—if thou thought'st it wilt
 Even then, as now, I should condemn thy power:
 But know, I fear thee not. The king is safe,
 And his victorious troops at break of day
 Will thunder in thine ears: thou and thy band
 Will ill sustain the shock of such an host.
 My life is in thy hands, but yet beware.
 Thy fate depends on mine. In Lacedæmon
 A prince like Agis soon will find Lysander.

AMPHARES.

Uncertain thy predictions of the future:
 Small is thy prescience, witness thy condition.
 Evxus, conduct him to yon corner tower.

EUANTHE.

LYSANDER!

LYSANDER.

Oh! I have withdrawn my eyes
 From thee, and to contention turn'd my heart.

EUANTHE.

A T R A G E D Y. 141

EUANTHE.

Yet look on me before we part for ever.

LYSANDER.

At looks or words of tenderness he'll smile,

And o'er the sorrows of our love rejoice;

Forgive me still, I must not, cannot speak,

EUANTHE.

But I will speak, and earth and heaven shall hear me;

AMPHARES too shall hear; for it will gall him

To hear EUANTHE now avow her love

And faith to her LYSANDER. Powerful words,

Emblems and figures of firm constancy,

Such as fond lovers lavishly employ

To sooth the pangs of parting and of absence.

Such music vows accord not with our state,

Our dreadful state: yet do not grieve thy heart,

Thy noble heart, too full of other sorrows,

With thoughts of what may happen to EUANTHE.

Nothing shall happen to debase EUANTHE.

The bondage and the shame that women suffer,

Who live the slaves of those who slew their lords,

I ne'er shall know, I never will endure.

If cruel destiny decrees thy fall,

Unspotted to the shades I'll follow thee,

For whom alone on earth I'd wish to live.

LYSANDER.

Lead on. Farewel, EUANTHE.

EUANTHE.

Gods above!

Am.

AMPHARES.

Conduct her to the tower where late you lodg'd
The captive queen.

EUANTHE.

Alas! no guarded tower,
Or vaulted dungeon, ever yet contain'd
Two more unhappy, or more helpless captives!

[*Exeunt guard.*]

AMPHARES.

LYSANDER's fierce demeanour and his threats,
Proud as he is, spring not from pride alone;
I must stretch forth my arms to shelter'd AGIS.
If I accomplish not this night his ruin,
To-morrow's rising sun may see my fall.
Curst be the temples! curst the priests of Sparta!
Now I am like a man who has adventur'd
To cross the flats forsaken by the main,
And looking back sees not the shore he left;
Thro' deeps and shallows, rocks, and quaking sands,
On he must go. To stop is sure perdition.

Enter SANDANE.

Hail to the queen of Sparta!

SANDANE.

Yes, AMPHARES:

Now fortune seems to smile upon SANDANE.
I saw the sullen captive led along,
His gloomy eye-balls fix'd upon the earth.

Am-

A TRAGEDY. 143

AMPHARES.

This night, O queen! must see the bold conclusion
Of a design, thus far so bravely borne.
On hollow and deceitful ground we tread,
Whilst AGIS lives.

SANDANE.

Thou speak'st my very thoughts.

Reasons there are, AMPHARES, which suspend
All sanctimonious reverence and respect.

AMPHARES.

Temples, and priests, and altars shall not save him,
Fate should drive us to the last extreme.

Meanwhile, I will employ more gentle means
To gain our ends: For sacrilege would rouse
The zealous multitude to rage and arms.

The temple is begirt with Thracian bands,
Who all access forbid: and AGIS knows not
What has befallen LYSANDER. I will send
A subtle Spartan in LYSANDER's name,

Who may by specious arguments persuade him
To quit the sanctuary; and then, O queen!
With all solemnity of pomp and form,
Th' assembled Ephori shall pass his doom,
And in the same decree include LYSANDER.

SANDANE.

Think'st thou the Ephori will give the sanction
Of their authority to AGIS' death?

AMPHARES.

They will. At midnight the stern judges meet
In Terror's temple; they have charg'd a herald

With

With orders to the troops not to advance
 On pain of treason. The astonish'd people
 Will crouch and tremble at that awful power,
 Which draws the sword of justice on a king.
 Then shall your lord's authority revive;
 And like the sun, when bursting from a cloud,
 With greater power and brighter splendor shine.

[Exeunt.]

The End of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

A TRAGEDY.

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ACT IV.

LYSANDER *as a Prisoner, the Thracian Guards
at a distance.*

LYSANDER *musing, advances and speaks.*

HAS virtue no prerogative on earth ?
And can the Gods permit the fall of AGIS ?
They can. 'Tis man's own arrogance arrays him
In gorgeous titles of excelling nature,
Care of the Gods, and centre of creation.
I fear, I fear man's life is but a dream ;
His soul a subtle essence of the blood,
A rainbow beauty, made to shine a space,
Then melt and vanish into air.
Ye mighty minds of sages and of heroes !
Epaminondas, Plato, great Lycurgus !
Who once with such transcendent glory shone,
Brighter than all the stars that deck the heavens,
Is your celestial fire for ever quench'd,
And nought but ashes left, the sport of chance,
Which veering winds still blow about the world ?
I will not think so ! Yet, alas ! the while
I see and feel presages that alarm.
If they prove true. If man is like the leaf,

H

Which

Which falling from the tree revives no more,
 I shall be shortly dust. That will not hear
 EUANTHE weep, nor see the shame of Sparta!
 Now I'm a living man, my mind is free,
 And, whilst I live and breathe, by heaven I'll act
 As if I were immortal.

Enter RHESUS and EUXUS.

RHESUS.

See where he stands! behold him!—O my brother!
 The bravest and the best of human kind.
 Opprest with grief and shame, and fatal love,
 Indignant virtue but augments his pain.
 Will not my EUXUS give his aid to heave
 This noble vessel from the rock it beats on?

[Goes up to LYSANDER.]

My lord! my leader! Oh!

LYSANDER.

My faithful RHESUS!

Com'st thou to share the ruin that LYSANDER
 Has brought upon himself, his prince, his country?

RHESUS.

I come more eager and more proud to share
 Thy present fortune, than thy former glory.
 Alas, my lord! 'twould make a stranger weep,
 — To see the chief, whom conquest crown'd to-day,
 A captive.

Ly.

A TRAGEDY.

147

LYSANDER.

RHESUS, thou hast nam'd the least
Of my calamities. I could endure,
With Spartan fortitude, my own disasters;
Bear to be hurled from meridian glory,
And, like a falling star, be seen no more.
But oh! the king!—and desolate EVANTHE!

RHESUS.

Do not despair.

LYSANDER.

Thou art my only hope.
This day thy generous brother sav'd my life;
At his request I yielded up my sword,
Else had LYSANDER like a soldier fall'n.
Thou art my friend in noble perils prov'd.
My fate, the fate of Sparta, and of AGES,
Is in the hands of EUXUS——

RHESUS.

Ah! my brother!

EUXUS.

O chief of Sparta! EUXUS is distress'd
On every side. Thy virtue, thy misfortunes,
Have touch'd my heart: but here in trust I stand.
Would I had never seen the walls of Sparta!

LYSANDER.

The Gods, the guardian Gods of Lacedæmon,
Have brought you hither to preserve a people,
And save from traitors' hands the best of kings.
Altho' at first you rashly drew the sword

H 2

In

In blind obedience to a leader's will,
 The gallant Euxus will not sure persist
 In error known, in manifest injustice.
 Thy trade is war, brave soldier ; this is not
 An office for thy sword.

EUXUS.

True are thy words.
 I was indeed deceiv'd, and came not here
 To mix in Sparta's strife ; but honour now——

RHESUS.

I will not hear thee plead so bad a cause.
 Is there a bond in nature like the tie
 Which binds the hearts of brothers ? And will Euxus,
 From vain ideas of fidelity
 To that detested traitor, false AMPHARES,
 His brother murder ?

EUXUS.

No.

RHESUS.

Then let thy arms
 Defend LYSANDER. By our country's Gods
 I swear, and by our warlike father's soul,
 Whose well-beloved son thou ever wert,
 That with the Spartan chief thy brother dies.

LYSANDER.

Might you not favour the escape of AGIS ?
 The guards are Thracians.

EUXUS.

I might favour thine.
 My power extends not to the guards of AGIS.

RHESUS.

A T R A G E D Y. 149

RHESUS.

And wilt thou not ?

EUXUS.

Command thyself, my brother.

RHESUS.

How canst thou hesitate ?

EUXUS.

I must beware,

Inferior in command to bold RHINALCES,

And ever view'd by him with jealous eyes.

Whilst I deliberate, no time is lost.

The light of day suits not with your designs ;

Before the night comes on, I will determine.

LYSANDER.

'Tis almost night, the sun hath left the heavens,

And doubtful twilight ushers in the gloom.

Perhaps the enemies of AGIS wait

The darkness of the night to cover deeds

They dare not act by day. This night I dread——

RHESUS.

The Ephori have sent a herald forth,

Charg'd with some solemn menace, and command

To stop the army's march.

LYSANDER.

If they obey,

The fane of Juno guards the king no more !

Eternal Gods ! how wretched is LYSANDER !

From me that herald should have heard his answer.

Cannot my RHESUS find one gallant Spartan

H 3

To

To bear my orders to the royal band
To storm the city?

RHESUS.

I myself will bear
These orders to the camp.

LYSANDER.

Another task,
More difficult and dangerous, is thine.
Assume the arms and vesture of thy country,
And thro' the Thracians win thy way to AGES,
RHESUS, the generous spirit of that prince
Is of a nature that excludes all fear,
Consideration, and respect of Self:
On earth he acts as if he were a God,
Immortal, and incapable of harm.
Think how the artful falshood of AMPHARES
May operate on such a royal mind.

Enter a Thracian.

THRACIAN.

The Spartan lord draws near.

EUXUS.

AMPHARES comes.

Retire, my lord, whilst I advance to meet him;
Our intercourse might lead him to suspicion.

LYSANDER.

Nor vigilance nor care I recommend
To thee, my RHESUS! But let caution rule
Thy forward zeal.

RHESUS.

A T R A G E D Y. 151

RHESUS.

It shall, my noble lord :

My heart beats high with hope to see thee rise
Once more, like Mars, in arms.

LYSANDER.

Eternal Gods !

In Thracian breasts the Spartan virtue lives.

[LYSANDER enters into the tower.

[Exit RHESUS.

Manet EUXUS.

Enter AMPHARES.

How does the haughty captive brook confinement ?

EUXUS.

Full of inquietude he seems, and sadness,
Now in some pensive posture sits a-while,
Then smites his breast, and, starting from his seat,
Walks to and fro with a disorder'd pace.

AMPHARES.

Admit no Spartan of whatever sex,
Or whatsoe'er affinity they claim.

EUXUS.

That strict command hath been already given.

AMPHARES.

'Tis needful, EUXUS, for his furious mind,
In this extreme, will snatch at slight occasions
To make incredible and wild attempts.
Renew the charge ; then go and search LYSANDER

H 4

For

For secret weapons. On his breast he wears
 A curious gorget, rich with precious stones,
 And a small portrait of surpassing beauty,
 The image of the fair Athenian maid,
 Drawn by an artist who has vied with nature
 In sweet expression of her matchless charms :
 That I must have.

EUXUS.

You shall without delay.

[Exit EUXUS.]

Manet AMPHARES.

Let other men deprive themselves of pleasure,
 And toil for bare ambition ; I'll provide
 A more luxurious banquet to my taste.
 What tho' as yet EUANTHE loves me not,
 It is the nature of her sex to change.
 With wondrous ease the female kind submit
 To destiny ; and soon are reconcil'd
 To persons and conditions once abhor'd.
 Like birds new caught, who flutter for a time,
 And struggle with captivity in vain ;
 But by-and-by they rest ; they smooth their plumes,
 And to new masters sing their former notes.
 This facile temper of the beauteous sex
 Great Agamemnon, brave Pelides, prov'd :
 They sack'd the cities, and they slew the fires,
 The brothers, and the lovers of the fair,

Who

A TRAGEDY. 153

Who weep'd a while, then wip'd their watry eyes,
And lost their sorrows in the hero's arms.

Enter SANDANE.

The herald is return'd. The royal band,
Inflam'd with rage and scorn, the mandate tore;
And to the city bend their rapid march.

AMPHARES.

Let them advance. They hasten to their fate.
A secret stratagem I have devis'd
To check these warriors in their bold career.

SANDANE.

The Ephori in resolution faint——

AMPHARES.

Their courage I'll restore; for AGIS yields
To the fallacious counsellor I sent.

DEMOCHARES, in sacerdotal robes,
As if disguis'd t'elude the Thracian guards,
Past in by my permission, and conjur'd
AGIS to quit the fane's uncertain shelter,
And seek the sure protection of the camp:
Himself he offer'd as his faithful guide.
This in LYSANDER's name. AGIS at first,
Irresolute and doubtful, balanc'd much:
At last this thought sprung up, and turn'd the scale:
That his escape would force us to submission,
And end the strife without the shock of arms.
DEMOCHARES at midnight is appointed

To come again ; and goes with an addition
That will give certain credence to his words ;
The gorget of **LYSANDER**,

SANDANE.

Now, **AMPHARES**,

I see the snares of death are wrapt around him ;
Our hated foe stands on the verge of fate :
He who despis'd **SANDANE**, and permitted,
With most insulting courtesy, my stay ;
I would not have remain'd one day in Sparta,
But for the hope I had to work his ruin.
He is the root, with him the branches fall.

AMPHARES.

Altho' his son is safe in Orchomenos,
Yet there in hopeless exile he must live.
But **AGESISTRATA**——

SANDANE.

Shall not survive

To travel suppliant thro' the states of Greece,
And shew her hoary hairs with ashes strew'd,
To move compassion in the giddy Greeks.
She's old, and fit to die.

Enter a Spartan messenger.

The Thracian troops

Who guard the temple, faithful to their charge,
Have seiz'd a spy ; who, cloath'd and arm'd like them,
Attempted to pass thro' their ranks to **AGIS**.

A TRAGEDY. 135

RHINALCES for a while delay'd the doom
That martial law decrees, till you yourself
Discourse and judge the captive.

AMPHARES.

I approve

The vigilance and conduct of RHINALCES.

[Exit Messenger.

SANDANE:

Still flows the tide of fortune; I'll dispatch
ORONTES to my lord. Joyful he comes
To re-assume his sceptre and his throne.
Farewel restraint, and laws that bind a prince.
The people's majesty, the senate's power,
Shall shrink beneath their awful monarch's sword.
Fear is the only principle of rule,
Which man, like other animals, obeys.

[Exit SANDANE.

Manet AMPHARES.

Why tarries EUXUS now?

Enter EUXUS.

I must applaud

Thy countrymen for discipline and care,
As well as valour; they have seiz'd a spy,
Who mix'd with them, disguis'd in Thracian arms.

EUXUS.

In Thracian arms!

AMPHARES.

Yes, to pass to AGIS.
Some bold adventurer of the royal band,
Whose life—Why art thou troubled? Has LYSANDER
Escap'd the guards?

EUXUS.

No, I am pale with anger,
At the reproachful terms, the bitter taunts,
Which I have suffer'd from incens'd LYSANDER,
In execution of thy late commands.

[Gives the gorget.]

AMPHARES.

Is that the cause?
He soon shall be no object of thy wrath.

[Exit AMPHARES.]

Manet EUXUS.

My brother seiz'd! I hesitate no more.
The voice of nature in my breast exclaims
Against the rigour of those guilty laws,
Which bind a soldier blindly to obey.
Son of my mother! Brother of my blood!
I fly to save thee.—Now I'm thine, LYSANDER.

[Goes to the gate of the tower.]

Chief of Sparta!

Enter LYSANDER.

Is EUXUS yet resolv'd?

EUXUS.

A TRAGEDY.

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EUXUS. *Exit Rhesus*
That thou shalt see, thy enemies are mine.
RHEUS is taken.

LYSANDER.

My contagious fate
Infects my friends ! my brave, my generous RHEUS !

EUXUS.

Friend of my brother ! first I set thee free,
An officer of mine commands that gate
At which the Thracians enter'd ; haste thee thither,
Array'd like one of those whom I will send
To guide thy steps.

LYSANDER.

Ye guardian Gods of Greece !
Whose ways mysterious fondly I arraign'd,
Forgive my rashness ! Prosper now my sword——
Where are my arms ?

[Whilst LYSANDER speaks, EUXUS beckons one of his soldiers.]

EUXUS.

Here enter, and obey
Without reply. *[Exit LYSANDER and the Thracian to the tower.]*

The soldiers hearts are mine.

Their various toils and perils I have shar'd,
Nay more than shar'd, the first in hard extremes,
When signal danger-claims a leader's sword.
No spoil, no treasure, have I e'er reserv'd ;
The wealth I covet is the soldier's love.

My

My bold Odryfians are a faithful band ;
In this distress I'll throw myself on them,
They will support me.

Enter a Spartan messenger.

MESSENGER.

Leader of Thracian bands!

AMPHARES and the magistrates of Sparta,
Met in the senate-house, expect thy presence.

EUXUS.

I will attend them.

[Exit messenger.]

Surely they have learned,
That I am brother to ill-fated RHESUS.

Enter LYSANDER in Thracian dress and arms.

LYSANDER.

Once more at liberty! Once more in arms!

To thee, brave Thracian——

EUXUS.

I am summon'd hence
To meet the Ephori. I fear, my lord,
They have discover'd RHESUS is my brother.

LYSANDER.

That secret in your breast and his is lodg'd:
Nor can his alter'd features now betray him. —
In early youth he left his native land;
The heat of summer, and the winter's cold,
In many a hard campaign, have chas'd his bloom.

EUXUS.

A TRAGEDY. 139

EUXUS.

Indeed I knew him not.

LYSANDER.

Then who could know him?

Calm and determin'd to the senate go:

Here I'll remain, and wait your quick return.

To know what they design imports us much.

EUXUS.

Your stay is full of danger; risk it not.

LYSANDER.

All necessary dangers must be risk'd.

Perhaps I am the subject of their councils,

Perhaps I may be call'd before the senate!

If I appear not, you must be discover'd,

And my escape too soon to them be known.

EUXUS.

Your reasons are of force. I am convinc'd.

Here, take my sword. Then, if we are betray'd,

My troops obey you. Now, my bold SITHONTES,

[To one of his Thracians.]

Draw your battalion nearer to the square,

And guard the person of this Spartan chief

As you would guard myself. If I'm detain'd,

Follow to death or victory LYSANDER.

[Exit EUXUS.]

LYSANDER.

Shall I obey the impulse of my heart,

And lead these Thracians to the tower that holds

My lost EUANTHE? No, let reason rule.

AMPHARES

AMPHARES will not, dares not, wrong her honour,
 Whilst undecided is the fate of AGIS.

'Tis night, but, never shall the morning rise
 On—Who can know the secret will of heaven!
 Down, down, enthusiasm! my heart be calm!

A little while, and thou shalt beat no more.

Oft have I wish'd for perilous occasions;

And, wandering in the academic grove,

Have rous'd myself with strong imagination

Of great exploits by ardent valour done:

But ne'er did fancy's tempest match the truth,

The strong reality of such a storm.

O did I combat but for life alone,

Were Sparta and EUANTHE safe spectators,

How gayly should LYSANDER take the field.—

EUXUS draws near—Upon the insect wing

Of a small moment ride th' eternal fates.

Enter EUXUS.

My fears are vain. The secret is unknown.

But RHESUS is condemn'd to die to-morrow.

LYSANDER.

To-morrow! many men will die to-morrow,

Who are not yet condemn'd.

EUXUS.

'Tis true by heaven!

Mortal designs and enterprizes rise

On every side. The Ephori resolve

At midnight to surprize the royal band,

And

A TRAGEDY. 161

And order'd me to hold my troops prepar'd
Their forces to sustain.

LYSANDER.

'Tis well! 'tis wondrous well!

They urge me now, and point the line of action.

Under the high up-lifted arm of fate

I'll rush, and strike before their blow can fall.

I'll storm the city while they force the camp.

Your troops——

EUXUS.

Shall join you at the gate. The word?

LYSANDER.

AGIS. Farewel! Now I shall save thee, AGIS,

Or leave my blood upon the stones of Sparta.

[*Exeunt* LYSANDER and EUXUS.]

The End of the FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

*AMPHARES and the Ephori with the Officers, &c.
The gate of the prison seen at a distance.*

First EPHORE.

THE hour is past.

Second EPHORE.

I fear——

AMPHARES.

Silence. He comes.

I hear the steps of wary treading feet.

Enter a Spartan, AGIS following.

AGIS.

This way conducts not to Amycla's gate.

Ah ! whither dost thou lead me ?

AMPHARES.

To thy death.

The Ephori of Sparta have condemn'd thee.

AGIS.

I am betray'd ! What mockery is this
Of sacred justice ? Lay aside the robes

And

And ensigns of authority prophan'd :
The pomp of magistracy suits not treason.

AMPHARES.

The licence of thy tongue affronts the laws,
Where awful rev'rence our high office bears.

AGIS.

Know ye not this, ye guardians of the laws,
The meanest citizen of Lacedæmon
Without free trial cannot be condemn'd ;
Much less your king. What law have I transgress'd ?
Point out my crime ; produce my bold accusers.

AMPHARES.

Thy crime is tyranny.

AGIS.

Is that my crime ?

Had AGIS been a tyrant, thou had'st been
His fawning slave, thou enemy of freedom.

AMPHARES.

Behold the stubborn spirit of this man :
He breathes his native arrogance, and still
Insults his judges, and avows his crimes.

AGIS.

Who made you judges of the life of AGIS ?
But you have judg'd : yourselves, and earth, and heaven,
Know how unjustly. To the Gods above,
The sure avengers of a murder'd king,
I make my last appeal. Their messenger
Is on the wing ; LYSANDER comes apace ;
And NEMESIS directs his righteous sword.

AMPHARES.

Proceeds this boldness from thy trust in him?
 Thy great avenger is, like thee, a captive,
 And under the same mortal sentence lies.

AGIS.

Ye powers above! LYSANDER too a captive!
 Where was he taken?

AMPHARES.

In the streets of Sparta,
 Clad in the servile garment of a Helot.

AGIS.

Alas! alas! LYSANDER! O my friend!
 Thy love for me, thy generous, fearless love,
 Has wrought thy fall. For me thou cam'st to Sparta,
 And, like the parent bird hov'ring too near
 Its captive young, thy noble life is lost! —
 Forgive these tears, my country! AGIS weeps
 For thee. Alas! thy brave defender's gone!
 O Lacedæmon, thou art fallen for ever!
 Thy bad estate shall every day grow worse;
 Successive tyrants shall exhaust thy strength,
 Till all thy generous youths have bled in vain;
 At last the consummation of thy woes
 Shall come upon thee; some ambitious foe
 Shall stretch the iron arm of conquest forth,
 And grasp thee in the circle of his empire.
 My native land, the kingdom of my fathers,
 Shall be no more a nation! O my country,
 How irretrievable is thy condition!

The

A TRAGEDY. 165

The Macedonian vulture hovers o'er thee,
Soon to descend, and on thy vitals prey.

AMPHARES.

Thou may'st delay, perhaps avoid, thy death.
Send forth thy mandate to the royal band,
To halt till further orders.

AGIS.

Ha! No more

I trust thee, traitor. Would I had ever been
Thus deaf to thee! No, let the royal band
Revenge their gallant leader and their king.

First EPHORE.

Thou tempt'st thy fate.

AGIS.

I scorn it. Since my hope
Of Sparta's lost, and my beloved friend
Has perish'd in my cause, why should I live?
In any period of my former days
I rather would have chose to die attempting
The glorious design, which you have ruin'd,
Than live the prince of a degenerate people,
The tame spectator of a falling empire.

First EPHORE.

To Reason hearken.

AGIS.

Reason bids me die,
As I have liv'd, unalter'd in my love
To Sparta, and unconquer'd in my purpose.
You mean to take advantage of my state,

Without

Without spectator, counsellor, or friend:
You think I dread the stern approach of death,
Because the blooming season of my life
Still promises a long extent of years:
But my forefathers blood is in my veins,
The blood of heroes, and of Spartan kings,
Less only than the Gods. I dare your worst,
And with my dying breath acquit my people.
The people rose; they hearken'd to the voice
Of Liberty, and blest the name of Agis.
But you, the nobles, an inglorious race,
Base as the dastard and unarmed Helots,
With foreign arms and mercenary aid,
Bore down the people and oppress your prince,
Whom death delivers. Agis shall not see
The last convulsions of expiring Freedom.
For in the first he dies.

AMPHARES.

We'll hear no more
Of these invectives. Bear him to the place
Of execution. Officers, advance
And do your duty.

OFFICERS.

This is not our duty.

AMPHARES.

What!

OFFICERS.

Murder of a king is not our duty.

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AMPHARES.

Mutinous slaves! for you I'll find a time.

Sir.

[To AGIS.]

AGIS.

Touch me not, for uncompell'd I go
To meet my destiny. Weep not for me, [To an officer,
O! thou whose nature suits not thy employment,
Weep not for me! I would not change conditions
With these bad men. I shall not feel the woes
That thou and all must feel, the woes of Sparta!
O! might my death avail my much-lov'd country,
I'd die as joyful then, as fearless now.

[Exit AGIS guarded.]

AMPHARES.

Atone your insolence by prompt obedience,
Or death's your portion.

To an Officer.

[Exeunt with AGIS.]

Manet AMPHARES, &c.

AMPHARES.

Magistrates of Sparta!

This painful work of necessary justice
Will quickly end the troubles of the state.

LEONIDAS, who owes his crown to you,
Your faithful zeal and service will reward.

[Exeunt Ephors.]

[Manet]

[*Manet AMPHARES and the Spartan who entered with AGIS.*]

AMPHARES.

Haste to the Thracian captain, and require him
To send his prisoner LYSANDER hither. [*Exit Spartan.*
AGIS remov'd, and turbulent LYSANDER,
Like snow along the shore, their army melts.

Enter Messenger from the dungeon.

MESSENGER.

The executioners refuse their office:
Sacred they hold the person of a king,
A Spartan-king descended from the Gods.

AMPHARES.

Again those fables of the villain priests
Rise up to thwart me. Now, my trusty servant,
Approve thy faith, and win my lasting favour.
Each instant of delay is big with peril
Whilst AGIS lives. Let thy good sword fulfil
The sentence of the law, and thy own tongue
Shall name the recompense.

MESSENGER.

Shall it, my lord?

I am your instrument; and bind myself
By this bold deed still faster to your fortunes. [*Exit.*]

AMPHARES.

Ye sons of bold ambition, learn of me:
Trust not the survey of apother's eye:
Your dangerous voyage needs a pilot's care
Who never quits the helm.

Enter

A TRAGEDY. 169

Enter SPARTAN.

SPARTAN.

We are betray'd.

LYSANDER——

AMPHARES.

What of him? Speak—falter not!

SPARTAN.

Is fled.

AMPHARES.

Whither? With whom?—Eternal Gods!

SPARTAN.

The guards have set him free, the open gates
I saw, and ent'ring search'd the empty tower.

AMPHARES.

That traitor EUXUS!—Now let me resolve
And quickly too.

SPARTAN.

The people are alarm'd,

And gather to their tribes.

AMPHARES.

Curst be their tribes.

The deed is done already. Yet I have
One pledge of value.

SPARTAN.

AGESISTRATA.——

AMPHARES.

This hour she dies. I've sent a trusty slave
To end her woes. But the Athenian maid,

I

Her

Her I'll bear off in spite of frowning fortune.
Go to the turret, and conduct her hither. [*Exit Spartan.*]

Manet AMPHARES.

Malignant powers! or blind unerring Fate,
This is your work: now you assert your empire.

Enter MESSENGER.

My lord, the troops of EUXUS have revolted.
RHINALCES visited this night each post,
And near Amycla's gate, some Thracians met,
Whose leader, question'd, answer'd with his sword.

AMPHARES.

By heaven and earth, LYSANDER!—Ha! proceed.

MESSENGER.

The sudden onset, and the cloud of night
The traitors favour'd; some escap'd our swords,
But many more in the sharp combat fell.

AMPHARES.

Did their fierce leader fall?

MESSENGER.

Above the rest
Conspicuous he fought; at him each sword
Was pointed. If he fell not on the spot,
Sure he receiv'd wounds that must fatal prove.

AMPHARES.

Confirm me that, and I will mock at fate.
Command my troops, that in the Forum watch,
To join RHINALCES. I myself will follow.

[*Exit* MESSENGER.]

Enter

A T R A G E D Y. 171

Enter EUANTHE.

How beautiful she is ! Should he survive,
Those charms divine he never shall enjoy.

EUANTHE.

Why hast thou call'd me hither to afflict
And torture me with spectacles of woe ?

*The Gate of the Prison opens, and
AMPHARES' Slave advances.*

Eternal powers ! why yawn yon dreadful gates ?
And from what horrid deed stalks yonder villain ?

MESSENGER.

Thy orders are obey'd. He lives no more.

EUANTHE.

Barbarian monster ! hast thou kill'd LYSANDER ?—

But I will not reproach thee, nor complain

To the regardless Gods. My doom is past ;

There is one only refuge for EUANTHE.

Once more I follow where LYSANDER leads,

Where murder and AMPHARES cannot come,

To part us more.

She runs toward the dungeon.

AMPHARES seizes her.

AMPHARES.

Some other season choose.

There is no leisure now for lamentation.

Forthwith conduct her to the Arcadian gate :

There with the horsemen wait.

I 2

Enter

Enter MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

My Lord, my Lord,
The royal band by Thracian Euxus led—

(Shout.)

AMPHARES.

My enemy prevails.—This way with me.
My steps pursue, or by the Gods of Hell!—

EUANTHE.

I will not leave this place. Draw forth thy sword,
And try if death can terrify despair.

AMPHARES.

Drag her along. *(Shout.)*

Again!—the foe draws near.

*(Shout from the other side,
AGIS and Liberty.)*

AMPHARES.

I am encompass'd; yet I'll mar their triumph.

Runs at EUANTHE with his sword.

Enter LYSANDER followed by RHESUS.

Infernal dog, turn and behold LYSANDER.
Fly, RHESUS, to the king. Traitor accurst! *Exit RHESUS.*
Down, down, to Tartarus; there villain, howl.

[AMPHARES falls.]

EUANTHE.

Amazing powers! alive! victorious! Oh!

LYSANDER.

And have I come to save thee, O EUANTHE!
But oh! I fear, I come too late for AGIS.

The

A TRAGEDY. 173

The dungeon-mouth is open. *Enter RHESUS.*
Tell me, RHESUS.

RHESUS.

The king is murder'd, in yon vault he lies.

LYSANDER.

My prince! my friend! thy goodness, and thy virtue,
Thy clemency, thy mildness, have undone thee!
Fatal to Nations is the dread example!
Hence monarchs, who with iron sceptre rule,
Will justify their treatment of mankind;
And virtuous princes, born in evil times,
Will hesitate to stem corruption's tide,
Lest they should be like AGIS overwhelm'd.

AMPHARES.

He who preferr'd LYSANDER to AMPHARES,
Has paid me with his life. My dying hand
Hath sow'd the seeds of discord and distraction.
Peace ne'er shall dwell in Sparta. Plagues on plagues
Shall rise to curse you, as— *(Dies.)*

LYSANDER.

Thy soul is curst.

There the fell spirit of AMPHARES fled
In imprecations. Prophet of disasters,
Upon the dismal banks of Acheron,
Amidst the wailing ghosts, still curse thy country,
And end a speech the damn'd will hate to hear.
Behold the mother of our murder'd king.

Enter AGESISTRATA and EUXUS.

AGESISTRATA.

Alas! I need not ask the fate of AGIS:

Your looks, your silence say, I have no son
 Yet speak to me, for I can hear the worst,
 I have been long familiar with affliction ;
 I am the widow of the fire of Agis.

LYSANDER.

There lies the bloody author of his death
 Slain by my hand.

ACESTRATA.

Alas ! alas ! my son !

Oft has my anxious mind this hour foreseen,
 And warn'd thee oft. But thou the danger scorn'd,
 When Sparta's glory was the price of peril.
 O ! son of Jove, great author of our race,
 Sustain my soul. For he who was my stay,
 My comfort, and my strength, is now no more,
 Yet in the path his generous spirit chose,
 He fell ; and conscious virtue crown'd his fall.

LYSANDER.

So fell not false AMPHARES.

EUKUS.

And SANDANE.

LYSANDER.

SANDANE dead !

EUKUS.

And dreadful was her death.

She fled, for refuge from the people's rage,
 To the same turret where AMPHARES' troops
 Guarded the queen, whose mantle on the ground
 She spied, and wrapt it round her wretched head ;

When

A TRAGEDY. 175

When suddenly a stern assassin came,
And stabb'd her, as that queen whose robe she wore.
Arriving then, I heard her shriek for help,
Implore her country's Gods, with bitter cries,
And, in her agony, divalge her crimes.
It was no wonder that she fear'd to die.

AGESISTRATA.

O guilt! thou'rt worst of all; he knew thee not,
For whom I mourn: Untimely was his fate;
Yet full of high and pleasing thoughts he fell.
Great-hearted Virtue, in its swelling hour,
Scarce feels the blow that strikes at brittle life.
The painful part is mine, in grief to live.
Would I had dy'd for thee, my son! my son!

EUANTHE.

EUANTHE's tears shall ever flow with yours,
For her protector and her gentle friend.
Mysterious are the counsels of the Gods;
Together AGIS and AMPHARES fall.

LYSANDER.

The son of AGIS lives, his infant years
Require a mother's care. Without delay
Proclaim the son of AGIS king of Sparta.
To him, the offspring of my prince ador'd,
Descend the love and faith I bore to AGIS.
Ye generous Thracians, who this day have shewn
The matchless worth and honour of your minds,
Henceforth be Spartans. And, ye Spartan youths,
Whom AGIS lov'd, and for whose rights he died,

Display the spirit of your dear-bought freedom;
 With grateful valour guard the hero's son,
 And prove that AGIS perish'd not in vain.

AGESISTRATA.

Conduct me, Spartans, to his dear remains.

LYSANDER.

Forbear a while yon dismal vault—*Enter MESSENGER.*

MESSENGER.

My Lord,

The people, headed by the priests of Jove
 And Hercules, in long procession come,
 Bearing the body of their royal lord,
 From that base dungeon to the sculptur'd tomb
 Which guards the sacred dust of Sparta's kings.

*Enter the Procession with
 the Body of AGIS.*

LYSANDER.

O Destiny supreme!

EUANTHE.

O sad remains of youth and majesty!

AGESISTRATA.

My son! my son!

Nature is thwarted here; thou shouldst have borne
 Thy aged parent to the silent tomb.

CHORUS.

Mourn, ye sons of Sparta, mourn,
 Pour the sad lamenting strain.

Wretched

A TRAGEDY

Wretched people ! Land forlorn !
Mourn the best of princes slain.

Priest of JUPITER.

He fell not as the warrior falls,
Whose breast defends his native walls.
To treason AGIS bow'd his head,
And by his guilty subjects bled :
Betray'd by those his mercy spar'd ;
Ingratitude was his reward.

CHORUS.

Shame is mix'd with Sparta's woe,
Blood of kings the city stains.
Ever let our sorrows flow,
Shame indelible remains.

Priest of JUPITER.

Yet AGIS triumph'd in his fall ;
For Virtue triumphs over all !
Great, superior to his fate,
He only griev'd for Sparta's state.
When Jove decrees a nation's doom,
He calls their heroes to the tomb.
Fearless they fall, immortal rise,
And claim the freedom of the skies.

CHORUS.

AGIS triumph'd in his fall,
Virtue triumphs over all !
Such a king shall ne'er return :
Our country and ourselves we mourn.

Priest of HERCULES.

AGIS fell, by fraud o'ercome;
 Alike was great Alcides' doom:
 Yet then most worthy of his fire,
 The son of Jove, when wrapt in fire,
 Victorious crown'd his labours past:
 His noblest labour was the last.

CHORUS of all.

Now in peace our hero lies,
 Ceas'd his toil, his race is run;
 Freedom is the glorious prize
 AGIS for his people won.

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. PRITCHARD.

*A King in bloom of youth, for freedom die!
Our hard, tho' bold, durst not have fear'd so high.*

*This is no credulous admiring age ;
But sacred sure the faith of Plutarch's page.
In simple stile that antient sage relates
The tale of Sparta, chief of Grecian states :
Eight hundred years it flourish'd, great in arms,
On dangers rose, and grew amidst alarms.
Of Sparta's triumph you have heard the cause,
More strong, more noble than Lycurgus' laws ;
How Spartan Dames, by glory's charms inspir'd,
The son, the lover, and the husband fir'd.
Ye fair of Britain's isle, which justly claims
The Grecian title, land of lovely dames,
In Britain's cause, exert your matchless charms,
And rouse your lovers, to the love of arms.
Hid, not extinct, the spark of valour lies ;
Your breath shall raise it flaming to the skies.
Now Mars his bloody banner hangs in air,
And bids Britannia's sons for war prepare :*

180 E P I L O G U E.

*Let each lov'd maid, each mother bring the shield,
 And arm their country's champions for the field.
 Arm'd and inflam'd, each British breast shall burn,
 No youth unlaurel'd shall to you return.
 Then shall we cease t' exult at trophies won,
 In glory's field, by Heroes—not our own.
 France yet shall tremble at the British sword,
 And dread the Vengeance of her antient Lord.*

THE
Siege of AQUILEIA.

A
TRAGEDY.

As it is ACTED at the
THEATRE-ROYAL
IN
DRURY-LANE.

— *Me non oracula certum
Sed mors certa facit, pavidò, fortique cadendum est:
Hoc satis est dixisse Jovem.*

LUCAN.

THEATRE ROYAL

DRURY LANE

IN

THE TRAGEDY

OF AGRICULTURE

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

*W*HEN Philip's son led forth his warlike band,
To die, or conquer, in a distant land;
To fan the fire, a martial muse he chose;
From Homer's song a new Achilles rose!
When generous Athens her prime trophies won,
Vanquish'd Darius, and Darius' son,
The stage breath'd war—the soldier's bosom burn'd,
And fiercer to the field each chief return'd:
Now, when the world resounds with loud alarms,
When victory sits plum'd on Britain's arms,
Be war our theme: the hero's glorious toil,
And virtue springing from the iron soil!
Our scenes present a siege in story known;
Where magnanimity and valour shone:
If nature guides us, if the hand of truth
Draws the just portrait of a Roman youth,
Who, with the best and noblest passions fir'd,
In the same moment conquer'd and expir'd;
Perhaps your hearts may own the pictur'd woe,
And from a sadder source your sorrows flow:
Whilst warm remembrance aids the poet's strain,
And England weeps for English heroes slain.

D R A.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

M E N.

ÆMILIUS, { Consul of Rome, and } Mr. GARRICK.
Governor of Aquileia. }

PAULUS, { Sons of the Consul. } Mr. AUSTIN.
TITUS, { Mr. HOLLAND.

VARUS, { Officers in the Army } Mr. DAVIES.
DUMNORIX, { of MAXIMIN. } Mr. BRANSBY.

GARTHA, { A Numidian Officer in } Mr. SCRASE,
the Troops of ÆMILIUS. }

Priest of JUPITER, Mr. BURTON.

LUCIUS, a Freedman, Mr. PACKER.

OFFICER, a Messenger, Mr. ACKMAN.

W O M E N.

CORNELIA, Wife to the Consul, Mrs. CIBBER.

T H E
Siege of AQUILEIA :

A
T R A G E D Y.

A C T I.

The Palace Court.

Enter PAULUS and TITUS.

PAULUS.

T H I S is no time to strive for vain renown.
The fate of Rome, remember that, my brother!
Depends on the defence of Aquileia.

TITUS.

PAULUS, I know.

PAULUS.

But thou dost not consider
Th' importance of this war. We fight not now,

As

As oft since Freedom fell our fathers fought,
 When Latian chiefs contended who should reign,
 With half the senate lifted on each side;
 The victor still was Roman, and rever'd
 The gods and temples of immortal Rome.
 But o'er yon mighty host that guards our walls,
 Fierce MAXIMIN commands; whether of Thrace,
 Or wild Dalmatia, so obscure his birth,
 Himself scarce knows; but sure Barbarian born,
 This savage soldier, nur'd in blood and war,
 Whom military frenzy hath set up
 To trample on mankind, abhors a Roman;
 And marks for death the noble and the brave.
 His yoke, at last, th' indignant senate scorns,
 The slumb'ring Genius of our country wakes,
 And rouses slothful Italy to arms.
 The furious tyrant from the frontier hastes,
 Like a wild beast gall'd by the hunter's spear,
 And, breathing vengeance, rushes upon Rome:
 Here first oppos'd, tenfold his fury burns;
 Here, in the pass of fate, our father stands,
 Defies and stops the monster in his rage,
 Till Rome's last legions come to give him battle.
 Now, when a soldier's life is of such moment,
 When destiny hangs on a single day,
 To fight for glory, TITUS, were a crime.

TITUS.

No, PAULUS, no! it is not fame alone
 That TITUS seeks to purchase from the foe;

Tho'

A TRAGEDY. 187

Tho' such a crime the gods and men would pardon,
 I know the peril that o'er Rome impends,
 And know the hated cause of all our ills,
 That army, only brave against their country,
 I mean to smite them, and their giant leader,
 Whom nature for a gladiator form'd,
 To be the sport, and not the lord, of Rome.
 The blow once struck, our foe must raise the siege,
 Or waste his veterans in vain attacks,
 And give to GORDIANUS easy conquest.

PAULUS.

Were this a frontier city far from Rome,
 And yon huge host compos'd of foes remote,
 German, or Parthian ; I would say to thee,
 Lead on, my brother ! Shield to shield we'd go,
 And fire yon turret, or together perish.
 But now when conquest by delay is gain'd,
 When Aquileia guards the walls of Rome,
 Dread of the great event has so possess'd me,
 That, like the Persian soldier, I could stay
 My arm uplifted, patient to the call
 Of cautious Duty.

TITUS.

And renouncing Fame ?

Oh ! PAULUS ! you have gain'd long since the prize
 That I contend for. Every martial palm
 Thy sword hath won. When I, like thee, am great
 In deeds of arms, like thee I may be wary.
 Now to my brother I lay bare my breast :

This

This famous siege approaches to its end;
 Whatever end the ruling gods ordain,
 Yet no distinguish'd action graces me.
 I've done my duty. That I reckon nothing;
 The meanest soldier has not shrunk from duty;
 Son of ÆMILIUS, and thy brother, PAULUS!
 I must do more, and by the gods I will!
 Here I have found a path that leads to glory;
 Do not oppose me, else—we're friends no more.—
 Our father comes. Speak not against my purpose,
 And I shall move the consul's noble mind.

Enter ÆMILIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

Health to my sons!

PAULUS and TITUS.

Heaven guard our father's life!

ÆMILIUS.

And bless my children! ha! your looks are keen.
 Your's chiefly, TITUS! what hath stirr'd your spirit?
 How points the enemy? This quiet night,
 In preparation past, portends a storm.

PAULUS.

On that attack which threatens the eastern gate
 The enemy hath labour'd all night long,
 Repairing what the river's rage had ruin'd.

ÆMILIUS.

It was a friendly flood. The river god
 With all his waters guards his native walls;

On that strong quarter they can ne'er prevail.
The north I fear, where yon stupendous tower
Our works commands.

TITUS.

It shall not long command,
Let but the consul grant me my desire.

ÆMILIUS.

What would my son?

TITUS.

Their tower is weakly guarded.

At break of day, a soldier from yon camp
Fled to my post; hollow and gaunt he was;
His shrivell'd limbs scarce bore his sounding arms.
Like him, he said, with toil and famine worn,
Were half the tyrant's host. For MAXIMIN,
Mad with delay, and fiercer from repulse,
Reviles his soldiers, drives them to the trench
With whips and sharp reproach. This day, o'ercome
By strong necessity, he breathes a while,
And sends his legions forth, to gather in
Whatever this exhausted region yields.
I saw the busy foragers in troops
March, and disperse themselves on every side,
Like playful children on a summer day,
Secure and careless; for no martial band
Of late hath sallied from our guarded gates.
This is the time. Permit me, O my father!
Now to attack their ill defended lines,
And fire that mighty tower in which they trust.

ÆMILIUS.

Well hast thou spoke, my son! thy zeal I love,
 Nor must thy skill and judgment pass unprais'd.
 Be thus attentive still, and trust me, *TITUS*,
 In future sieges, and in other wars,
 Swift execution shall thy purpose honour.

TITUS.

Ne'er shall I see another siege like this,
 Ne'er draw my sword in such a glorious cause.
 Alas! my lord! check not my spring of thought,
 Nor nip the only bud it yet has borne.

ÆMILIUS.

Riper occasions will thy valour claim.
 Danger comes on; *Typhæus*-like it comes,
 Whose fabled stature every hour increas'd.

TITUS.

O! judge not of the counsel by the weight
 Of him that gives it. Would to heaven, my lord!
 That I could now divest me of that youth
 Which mars my credit. Chearfully I'd step
 Far into age, to gain but for a day
 The grave authority which years bestow.

PAULUS.

What brings the brave Numidian *GARTHA* hither?

*Enter GARTHA.**GARTHA.*

Hail to the general!

A TRAGEDY. 195

ÆMILIUS.

Hail, valiant GARTHA!

How has the morning past where you command?

GARTHA.

It has been busy. The presumptuous foe
In loose disorder'd squadrons rang'd the fields,
I watch'd the time; and sudden as the blast
That rises in the desert, out we rush'd
And swept them from the plain. Safe in our speed
We urg'd the chace far as the rising ground,
And unmolested view'd the camp below.
This worthy of your notice I observ'd,
Their wond'rous tower, the work of many a day,
Stands now protected by a feeble guard.

TITUS.

Thanks for thy welcome tidings, noble GARTHA!
The guardian gods of Rome bend from their skies,
And point this action out. Hear me, my father!
If ever since my birth I gave thee joy,
If e'er thou did'st, as parents oft are wont,
Interpret large the promise of my childhood,
O hear and grant my chief and dear request!
Let me go forth: be this my first exploit,
To wrap in fire the tyrant's boasted tower;
That Rome, who glories in the Æmilian line,
May join your TITUS to his kindred names!

ÆMILIUS.

In thee the spirit of thy fathers speaks,
Or some superior power thy bosom fires,

Whom

Whom I oppose no more. Go, and fulfil
Thy destiny. Brave GARTHA too shall add
His troops to thine. Prepare what else——

TITUS.

'Tis done.

Destructive instruments and balls of fire
Are ready at the gate.

ÆMILIUS.

Farewel, my son!

If you prevail, urge not too far your fortune.
Remember still my words; that when we meet,
I may have cause to praise thy conduct then,
As now thy courage, TITUS.

TITUS.

GARTHA, come!

[*Exit* TITUS and GARTHA.]

ÆMILIUS.

PAULUS, lead thou thy legion to the gate,
And favour their retreat. It may be needful;
But mix not in the fight; for mighty cities
Have been by such temerity surpriz'd.

PAULUS.

Would that there was no Roman breast more prone
To rash attempts, than mine! I wish, my lord,
That I had led, and TITUS had sustain'd me.

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

Consul of Rome! this arrow, thus inscrib'd,
Fell on the green slop'd bank, fast by my post;

And

A TRAGEDY. 193

And as it bears your name, myself have brought it.

[*Emilius reads*]

"In three days hence, even with the ides of June,

"The Roman army comes to your relief.

"Be sparing of your troops; protract the siege;

"Thou art the shield of Rome and Gordianus."

Emilius.

Soldier, return, and publish to the legions

The welcome tidings of a near relief.

Officer.

Gladly, my lord. Much have the troops endur'd,

And with unshaken constancy they suffer.

Exit Officer.

Paulus.

Had this advice arriv'd ere Titus went,

I think he hardly had obtain'd permission.

Tho' Maximin should raise an hundred towers,

For three short days his fury we may scorn.

Emilius.

Go, and prevent the fally. Tell thy brother,

What the imperial mandate here contains.

It is the emperor's command recalls him.

Paulus.

With pleasure I obey.

[*Exit Paulus.*]

Emilius alone.

I must reserve

My sons, my soldiers, for a nobler service,

K

And

194 *The Siege of AQUILEIA:*

And in the battle aid the Roman arms,
The hour approaches, that must give to Rome
A legal lord, by her own suffrage chosen,
Or fix a barb'rous master o'er mankind.
That barb'rous master I shall never own.
If I could stoop to drag the servile chain,
And leave the vassal of a vile Dalmatian,
Yet I could not conceal me in the croud
Of prostrate Romans; I that stood aloft,
And bore thro' Italy the senate's standard.
Fast by that standard will I plant my foot,
There with my boys a glorious conquest gain,
Or end at once the long Æmilian line.

[*CORNELIA appears.*]

Behold the only moment that can shake
One moment my resolve! What will become
Of thee, CORNELIA! doom'd perhaps to live,
Like PRIAM's wretched queen, the slave of those
By whom her sons, her husband, country fell.

Enter CORNELIA and PRIEST.

CORNELIA.

Why is my lord alone? Where are my sons?

ÆMILIUS.

This day, CORNELIA, brings us welcome tidings,
The Emperor approaches with his host.

CORNELIA.

Thanks to the gods! But say, where are my children?

ÆMI-

A TRAGEDY 1951

ÆMILIUS.

This instant I expect them to return.

CORNELIA.

From whence, ÆMILIUS?

ÆMILIUS.

From the northern gate.

TITUS had form'd a brave, a great design;

But when assurance of relief arriv'd,

My PAULUS hasten'd to recal his brother.

CORNELIA.

'Tis as I fear'd. PAULUS will come too late.

The omens of the gods must be fulfill'd.

ÆMILIUS.

What evil omens has CORNELIA seen?

CORNELIA.

'Tis strange to tell; but as I slumb'ring lay,

About that hour when glad Aurora springs,

To chase the lagging shades, methought I was

In Rome, and full of peace the city seem'd.

My mind oblivious too had lost its care.

Serene I step'd along the lofty hall,

Embellish'd with the statues of our fathers,

When suddenly an universal groan

Issued at once from every marble breast.

Aghast I gaz'd around! when slowly down

From their high pedestals I saw descend

The murder'd GRACCHI. Hand in hand, the brothers

Stalk'd towards me. As they approach'd more near,

They were no more the GRACCHI, but my sons

K. 2

PAULUS

PAULUS and TITUS. At that dreadful change
 I shriek'd and wak'd. But never from my mind
 The spectacle shall part. Their rueful eyes!
 Their cheeks of stone! the look of death and woe!
 So strange a vision ne'er from fancy rose.
 The rest, my lord! this holy Priest can tell.

ÆMILIUS.

Why this is nothing but a common dream;
 For often when the waking mind is charg'd
 With apprehension of uncertain ills,
 Imagination, in the hour of rest,
 Presenteth wild fantastic combinations,
 That have a shade and tincture of the past;
 But 'tis the weakness of the human mind
 That joins the vain assemblage to futurity.

PRIEST.

Men reason thus, my lord! who think their reason
 Can grasp and measure all; presumptuous thought!
 Sounds more than human have been often heard,
 And shapes celestial seen, by mortal man;
 But yet most frequent in the silent night
 Are warnings given by strange portentuous dreams.
 The history of mighty Rome abounds
 In awful instances. The old republic
 By them has oft been sway'd, and oft preserv'd.

ÆMILIUS.

But tell me, Priest of Jove! what do the gods
 By their more certain omens now declare?

PRIEST.

A TRAGEDY. 197

PRIEST.

Consul ! with the most venerable rites
That our religion knows, I have perform'd
A sacrifice to Capitolian Jove,
This pious matron present : never yet
Since at the altars of the gods I stood
Did I behold such omens of calamity.
Yet they were intricate, ambiguous, dark ;
And tho' some parts I might interpret fair,
Even these were mix'd and full of dire perplexity.
No further can I see into the cloud,
That veils the will of heaven ; but this I say,
And by the sceptre of the god I serve
It is the truth : Some dreadful danger hangs
O'er thee thyself, this city, or thy race.

(Shout.)

CORNELIA.

Ha ! what means that shout ?

ÆMILIUS.

It is a joyful shout.

Behold the cause : see where that dusky smoke
Darkens the air. And now the flame bursts out ;
Their turret blazes, and my Tirus conquers.

CORNELIA.

O heaven and earth ! O son too well belov'd !

Why do these cruel omens check my joy ?

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

'Consul ! your valiant son hath fir'd the tower ;
 But whilst he urg'd too far the flying foe,
 A band, that lay conceal'd beyond the height,
 Has gain'd the plain between him and the city.

ÆMILIUS.

O rashly brave ! whom I forewarn'd in vain.—
 Retire, CORNELIA, yet he may be rescu'd.

LUCIUS.

Enter another OFFICER.

LUCIUS.

The northern gate unguarded stands :
 For when brave PAULUS saw his brother's peril,
 He with his legion rush'd upon the foe,
 And furious is the fight.

CORNELIA.

Both, both are lost !

ÆMILIUS.

Unhappy youths ! my steady PAULUS too !
 Where is our discipline, obedience where ?——
 I have no leisure now for words, CORNELIA !
 Implore the gods to guard you and your children.

*[Exit with his attendants.]**Manent*

Manent CORNELIA, and PRIEST.

CORNELIA.

Perhaps ere this CORNELIA has no children !
 They both are fallen into the fatal snare.
 Tremendous oracle ! too late reveal'd.

PRIEST.

Abandon not thy soul to such despair ;
 The sword of war, devouring as it is,
 Consumes not all. The destin'd number die,
 And from the bloodiest field still some return.

CORNELIA.

My sons will ne'er return, I know them well.
 The noble heart of TITUS, if he lives,
 This instant swells with grief, and pride, and shame.
 Will he, the author of this fatal combat,
 Forfake the soldiers whom he led to slaughter ;
 Return discomfited, and sav'd by flight,
 To bear reproach, and blush in Aquileia ?
 He will not, holy Flamen ! Nor will PAULUS :
 Calm as he is, and master of himself,
 My generous PAULUS will not leave his brother.
 Alas ! I never shall behold them more :
 This is the evil that the gods foretold.
 Ye constant matrons of Rome's former days !
 Alas ! I have no fortitude like yours.
 Mine were no public cares. In the mild shade
 Of sweet domestic happiness I liv'd,

K 4

Till

0200 *The Siege of AQUILEIA.*

Till this fierce tempest rose, the storm of war,
Whose rage hath burst on the Æmilian race.

PAUSE.

Lady, retire. I to the walls will go,
And learn what has befallen. Remember thou,
How oft, in human life, the great conclusion
Of fear'd and wish'd events mocks all conjecture.

[Exit.]

The End of the First Act.

ACT

A TRAGEDY.

ACT II.

Enter PRIEST.

PRIEST.

TOO soon thy omens are accomplish'd, Jove!
O wretched parents! O devoted race!

Enter LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

CORNELIA comes, impatient of thy stay.

PRIEST.

How shall my tongue perform a faithful office,
And tell CORNELIA what my eyes beheld?
Her sons I saw surrounded by the foe;
And their small troops seem'd like a bank of sand,
Which, by the flowing tide encompass'd round,
Each moment wastes and lessens to the view.
Their wretched father saw, and could not save them:
For full oppos'd to him the tyrant stood,
With half his host embattled. Thrice **EMILIUS**
Came to the front of his remaining troops,
As if he meant to rush upon the foe,
And thrice the consul pull'd the father back:

Then looking down and leaning on his sword,
The tears fast trickling down the warrior's cheeks,
He paus'd a while, and turn'd him to the city.

Enter CORNELIA.

CORNELIA.

Thou bring'st no comfort! Terror and dismay
Are written on thy brow! Haste, tell me, Flamen.

PRIEST.

Behold a soldier bleeding from the field.

Enter GARTHA wounded.

CORNELIA.

'Tis the Numidian chief!

GARTHA.

Lady, these wounds,

Which bleed to death, make GARTHA not ashamed
That he alone revisits Aquileia.

Involuntary messenger am I
Of tidings harsh to tell. My fiery steed,

Gall'd with an arrow, bore me from the plain,

Where still your valiant sons maintain the fight,

And with amazing actions fate suspend.

The boldest soldiers of the tyrant's host

Shrink from their rage. Lady, I speak with pain.

This to the consul. I advis'd the fall,

And

And sell into the ambush. I rejoice
That I shall not survive it —

PRIEST.

Help! he faints.

GARTHA.

Oh! would I had fallen at the feet of TITUS!

[Enter Attendants.

PRIEST.

Support, and bear him hence.

CORNELIA.

O generous GARTHA!

Too dearly hast thou prov'd thy constant faith.

[Exit GARTHA supported.

No more I hear the shouts of distant war,

'Tis horrid silence all. The work of death

Is over. Doubt and fear are at an end.

Now certain anguish and despair prevail.

Enter ÆMILIUS attended.

CORNELIA.

My husband!

ÆMILIUS.

Oh! CORNELIA! wretched dame!

Look not to me; I bring no consolation,

I cannot comfort thee. I could not save

My children from destruction. Rigid duty

Made me spectator of their overthrow:

O fatal ensigns of unhappy power!

K 6

Q had

802 *The Siege of AQUILIAN*

O had *ÆMILIUS* been a poor *Centurion*,
He might unheeded have forsook his station,
And perish'd with his children.

CORNELIA.

They are dead.
PAULUS and *TITUS* dead. Their mother lives!
Ye all-directing gods, whom we adore,
Whom I with spotless hands have ever serv'd,
Is misery like this my just reward?
Your dearest gifts are to destruction turn'd.
Had I not been the fond, the happy mother
Of sons, for whom all mothers envy'd me,
I had not been above all women wretched.

PRIEST.

Great are thy woes, *CORNELIA*, great indeed!
Yet not unfrequent in this changeful world
Are woes like thine; and greater still than thine.
The famous matron of thy name and blood,
The first *CORNELIA*, saw her godlike sons
In Rome betray'd, and slain by Roman hands.
And oft in every age have wretched mothers
Surviv'd their families', their country's ruin,
And liv'd sad captives in a foreign land:
No kindred ear to hear, no eye to weep
In pity of their woes: no human face
For them to look on, but the hateful face
Of foes, who made them childless, widows, slaves!
To thee remain thy husband, and thy country,
In whose defence thy sons so greatly died.

Then

A TRAGEDY 605

Thee Rome shall honour, and revere in thee,
The sacred memory of her heroes slain.

ÆMILIUS.

It is the right, the birthright, of our house,
For Rome to die : in every signal strife,
In every struggling period of the state,
My fires have bled. My sons have chose their time ;
Bravely they fought, and nobly were they slain.
Rome still shall stand, tho' the ÆMILII fall.
The tyrant's works are levell'd with the ground,
And his proud tower yet smokes upon the plain.
Our ramparts now his fierce assaults defy ;
The Roman army, like a gather'd storm,
Rolls towards him. My sons shall be reveng'd ;
My eyes shall see, my sword shall share, the vengeance.

CORNELIA.

Mean while, unburied on the bloody field,
Amidst the common heap, my children lie,
Majestic PAULUS, and my lovely TITUS,
Is this the end of all your mother's care ?
Some fierce barbarian now insults the dead ;
Adding dishonest wounds. O ! might not gold
Their dear remains redeem ? Alas ! alas !
'Tis the sole consolation I can hope for,
To save them from the beasts and birds of prey,
That howl and scream around these fatal walls,
To fold once more their bodies in my arms ;
To lay them decent on the funeral pile,
And o'er their ashes pour a parent's heart.

ÆMILIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

Mindful of that sad duty, I sent forth
A herald to the tyrant, and expect
Each moment his return. The trumpet sounds.

(Enter Herald, with an Officer of MAXIMIN'S.)

'Tis he, and with him one whose lofty port,
And splendid arms, bespeak his high command.

CORNELIA.

Forgive, O chief unknown, a mother's grief,
Which, short'ning the respect thy presence claims,
Hastes to enquire, if MAXIMIN will give
The bodies of her children to the tomb?

OFFICER.

Far be its dismal honours from your offspring!
Lady, your valiant sons survive the field.

CORNELIA.

Are they not dead? were not the ÆMILII slain
On yonder field? Their father saw them fall.

OFFICER.

Faint with long fighting, and encompass'd round,
Opprest with numbers, and born down they fell;
Not slain, nor greatly wounded. Captives now,
In their behalf, from MAXIMIN I come.

CORNELIA.

O! fire of gods and men! eternal joys!
For ever prais'd be thy protecting arm!

OFFICER.

Upon their father now depends their fate:
'Tis his to grant what MAXIMIN requires.

CORNELIA.

A TRAGEDY. 207

CORNELIA.

Let his demands be boundless as the wish
Of avarice itself, they shall be granted.
Treasures there are from age to age preserv'd,
The acquisition of our frugal fires;
Well are the treasures of our house bestow'd,
If they redeem their lives who should possess them.

OFFICER.

It is not gold that MAXIMIN requires.
To thee, ÆMILIUS, I address my words :
Imperial MAXIMIN, lord of mankind,
Charges the senate and the Roman people
With breach of vows, and unprovok'd rebellion ;
But chiefly thee, who first withstood thy sovereign,
And stopt the progress of his just revenge.
The righteous gods, he saith, to thee averse,
Have made thy sons the captives of his arms ;
Them he has doom'd to death, and will this day
The sentence execute, unless their father,
Before the sun shall set, give up the city.

CORNELIA.

Relentless tyrant ! O all-seeing gods !
How dire a prospect opens to CORNELIA !

ÆMILIUS.

I stand not now in equal lists with MAXIMIN,
Nor mean I hear to plead the cause of Rome :
'Twould but offend thine ear, Yet tell thy lord,
He knows ÆMILIUS not, and therefore wrongs him
By this unworthy trial of his faith :

Unhappy,

Unhappy, most unhappy, he may make me,
But he and fortune cannot make me base.

OFFICER.

Is this the answer I must bear to Maximin?

ÆMILIUS.

What other answer could he hope from me?

OFFICER.

Think of the consequence of this defiance.

ÆMILIUS.

I'll meet it when it comes: now I must think
Of trust repos'd in me by injur'd Rome.

OFFICER.

Stout are thy words: But will this pride of spirit
Sustain thee through the horrors that surround thee?
Thy lips have now pronounc'd thy children's doom,
Which executed, as it soon must be,
Will move the sternest soldier of our camp
To tender pity. Never yet were seen
So brave a pair as thy unhappy sons;
Nature on them has pour'd out all her gifts,
And dress'd their virtue in the fairest form.

CORNELIA.

O thou, whose tongue in Roman accents speaks,
Whose gentle aspect shews a mind humane!
Take pity on the most unhappy parents,
That ever bore the name. This fatal day
Has prov'd too well the worth of these my sons,
Whom nature, tho' they less deserv'd, would love.
O! soften to the tyrant this refusal.

I know

A TRAGEDY. 269

I know not what to say: I have no right,
But that which signal misery confers,
To beg from thee assistance. If thou hast
At home an anxious mother, or sad spouse,
Who daily trembles for thy noble life,
Think of her state, and listen to CORNELIA,
Whose tongue till now did never plead for favour.

ÆMILIUS.

O generous stranger! our misfortunes touch
Thy manly mind.

OFFICER.

No stranger I: behold
A Roman, and a friend. This helmet off,
Perhaps CORNELIA may remember VARUS.

CORNELIA.

VARUS! my friend! companion of my youth!
O heavy change of times! on other terms
In Rome, delightful Rome, we wont to meet.

VARUS.

Most true, CORNELIA.

CORNELIA.

And is VARUS come
To aid the tyrant's arms against his country?
Come the fierce herald of his kinsmen's doom?

VARUS.

With the same heart, the same unalter'd mind
To all that e'er he lov'd, is VARUS come.

ÆMILIUS.

Permit me, gallant VARUS! still to claim
Thy friendship, tho' I stand the tyrant's foe.

VARUS.

VARUS.

ÆMILIUS! fortune rules the lives of men.
 Had I been Consul, and possess'd in Rome
 Of civil dignity; perhaps, like thee,
 I should have arm'd me in the senate's cause;
 Whilst thou, a soldier on the distant frontier,
 Perhaps, like me, hadst fought thy leader's quarrel.
 The armies of the north acknowledge MAXIMIN.
 I lead the British legions to the war:
 But more of this hereafter. Thou hast heard
 My horrid message, and hast made such answer
 As well becomes a Roman and a consul.

ÆMILIUS.

Barbarian as he is——forgive me, VARUS!
 He cannot mean this threatening to fulfil.

VARUS.

O! trust not the humanity of MAXIMIN.
 If he's not cruel, why art thou in arms?
 Besides, his temper, ever fierce and savage,
 Is now incens'd, enrag'd almost to madness,
 By the wide wasting havock of this day.
 His works are levell'd, his best legions thin'd,
 His nephew ALGAR slain by TITUS' hand.
 In the first transport of his furious wrath,
 He did devote to the infernal gods,
 And ALGAR's shade, the pris'ners of the field.
 An old Ligurian, captain of his guards,
 Step'd in and interpos'd this crafty counsel——
 Your answer I will bear, but give it colour

That

A TRAGEDY. 121

That may denote the dawning of submission,
And so retard —

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

An herald from the camp
Requires the tribune forthwith to return :
Impatient MAXIMIN stands on the plain,
Known by his purple and gigantick stature.

CORNELIA.

Dreadful impatience ! most inhuman rage !
By the dear sympathy of Roman blood,
Which in our veins from the same fountain flows,
Let me entreat thee, VARUS, to appease
The angry tyrant — Dispos'd to yield all that his honour can.
And if stern MAXIMIN prefers revenge
To profer'd gold, yet try if wealth can win
His friends and favourites to be more gentle.

VARUS.

He has no friends nor favourites ; from fear
His soldiers serve, his officers obey.
I must be gone, for MAXIMIN brooks not
His orders slighted. Trust my zeal, CORNELIA !
Had I but equal power, your sons were free,
Consul.

EMILIUS.

Let me conduct thee to the gate,

And

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And tell thee, as we go, what yet remains
Untold of our condition:

Exeunt EMILIUS and VARUS.

CORNELIA.

Interpreter of heaven's mysterious will,
Augur rever'd! how will the evening close
Of this distressful day? Haste to repeat
The sacred rites, and prove thy art divine.

PRIEST.

Such is my purpose, soon as Phoebus bows
From his meridian height. Lady, my mind
Has ponder'd MAXIMIN's abhor'd demand.
One only course there is to end the strife,
The dreadful strife of nature and of duty,
In great EMILIUS' mind; and reconcile
The children's safety with the father's honour.

CORNELIA.

'Tis that I wish for, but of that despair.

PRIEST.

The Roman host, by GORDIANUS led,
In three days hence reach Aquileia's walls;
Their near approach to MAXIMIN unknown.
Therefore the consul, without breach of honour,
Without injustice to the Roman state,
May stipulate with MAXIMIN, to yield
The city on the fourth returning day;
If not reliev'd. Ere that the chance of war
Raises the siege, or makes resistance vain.

CORNELIA.

A TRAGEDY. 211

CORNELIA.

Wife are thy words ; and now the dawn of hope
Breaks on my darksome mind. Believe me, priest,
The loss of my dear sons in battle slain,
As once I thought them, was less terrible
Than the dire apprehension of that death
To which the tyrant dooms them ; worse to me,
And worse, far worse to them. Alas ! my sons !
Uncertain is your fate ! who can foretell
The savage motions of the tyrant's will ?
And yet this counsel seems the only means
Of preservation. Minister of heaven !
Let us retire, and at the altar bow
Of Jove eternal, who thy heart inspir'd.

Exeunt.

The End of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

Enter ÆMILIUS; and from the other side of the stage, LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

TO every post and station round the wall,
Your orders have been borne. And each commander
With zeal obey'd.

ÆMILIUS.

The soldiers' countenance,
How seems it, LUCIUS?

LUCIUS.

Determin'd to the death.
Strong indignation at their leader's fate,
With grief and pity, o'er their visage gleams;
But every passion settles to revenge.

ÆMILIUS.

LUCIUS! 'tis well. See that my steed be led
Accoutr'd to the gate. I know not, LUCIUS,
How soon I may bestride him.

Exit LUCIUS.

ÆMILIUS *alone.*

This distress
Grows heavier every hour: like a green wound,

At

At first I felt it not; it rankles now.
 Would I had listen'd to the urgent voice
 Of nature, when she call'd me to the field!
 Who could have blam'd the passions of a father?
 If Rome had blam'd me, in the silent tomb
 Her voice had not been heard.

Enter CORNELIA.

CORNELIA.

Why tarries VARUS?

ÆMILIUS.

He will return, CORNELIA! doubt not that.
 The tyrant knows the snare in which we're caught,
 And to the uttermost will prove our souls
 Before he breaks it.

CORNELIA.

By the gods inspir'd,
 The priest hath found the means to set us free,
 If you consent.

ÆMILIUS.

If I consent? alas!
 That doubt implies suspicion of the means.

CORNELIA.

Hear me, and judge: capitulate with MAXIMIN,
 In three days hence to yield up Aquileia,
 If not reliev'd. Before that time expires,
 The arms of Rome victorious raise the siege;
 Or, if defeated, make resistance vain.

Bend

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Bend not thine eye, *ÆMILIUS*, on the ground!
The strictest law of duty is fulfill'd.
If thou reject'st this counsel, I will say,
Not *MAXIMIN* the tyrant slew my children,
But their own cruel father.

ÆMILIUS.

Oh! forbear!

My soul is rack'd; my heart asunder torn.
The eyes of all the world on me are fix'd;
Rome and mankind from me expect their fate.
I must consider this applauded counsel,
Ere I embrace.

CORNELIA.

This city is not Rome,
Nor your small garrison the Roman host.
A part, a little part, a very grain
Of publick interest, in your mind outweighs
Your children, all your children. Oh! *ÆMILIUS*!
Alike the father and the mother bear
The name of parent; but a parent's love
Lives only in the tender mother's heart.

ÆMILIUS.

First let us learn what answer *VARUS* brings.

Enter VARUS.

He comes, and various passions dim his face.

CORNELIA.

O! *VARUS*, *VARUS*!

VARUS.

O! too just thy fears!

Of

Of my lov'd kinsmen unrevok'd the doom!
 VARUS hath kneel'd in vain. Hard as the rocks
 Of wild Dalmatia, is the tyrant's heart.
 Incens'd at the refusal which I bore,
 His fury rages like a fire confin'd,
 And threatens every quarter. Hear, ÆMILIUS,
 And tremble now for Rome, as for thy children!

ÆMILIUS.

For Rome?

VARUS.

The tyrant (lend me patience, Heaven!
 To speak with calmness, I who serve him still)
 This day hath vow'd to raze imperial Rome.

ÆMILIUS.

Barbarian! why?

VARUS.

To fix his wavering host,
 To glut his legions with the mighty spoil.
 Disease and famine prey upon his troops,
 And rumour cries, that a relief is near.
 The soldiers faint, and murmur at the length
 And havock of this siege. The crafty tyrant
 With sound of trumpet thro' his camp proclaim'd,
 That he will give the city to be sack'd,
 Raze her proud walls, and change the seat of empire.
 The glad Barbarians shouted to the skies,
 And mix'd with their applause unheard-of oaths
 To die with MAXIMIN.

L

ÆMILIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

What said the Romans?

VARUS.

In number few, and scatter'd thro' the bands,
They griev'd, but carefully suppress their sorrow,

ÆMILIUS.

Was there no Roman near enough to plant
A dagger in the heart of MAXIMIN?

VARUS.

Before the tyrant reach the walls of Rome,
That Roman may be found.

ÆMILIUS.

Above the name

Of god-like SCÆVOLA his fame shall rise.

VARUS.

The righteous gods, whom MAXIMIN contemns,
Have in their vengeance urg'd his frantic mind
By this decree to work his own perdition.

Long honour'd Rome! tho' thou hast lost so much

Of thy primæval splendor, still my heart

Thy image worships; still for thee I fought,

And from Siluria, to the savage shore

Of Caledonia, I thy trophies rear'd!

And shall thy soldier draw his sword against thee,

Or stand a tame spectator of thy fall?

No! I am thine, devoted, as of old

Thy darling sons, when first thy glory rose.

Nor shall thy turrets bow, imperial Rome!

Till low in dust the head of VARUS lies.

ÆMILIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

There spoke a Roman!

CORNELIA.

I rejoice to hear

The voice of VARUS thus declare for Rome.

Her distant danger may thy arm avert!

But who defends my sons, whose sudden fate

This day decides?

VARUS.

O were it possible

To gain a short delay! Time presses me;

For strong in troops and terrible is MAXIMIN,

Nor am I yet prepar'd to rise in arms.

In a few days—nay, if the Roman host

Were near at hand,—

CORNELIA.

My husband, speak!

ÆMILIUS.

O! VARUS!

The fates are merciful. Peruse these lines.

VARUS.

"In three days hence." Then, tyrant, I shall meet thee.

But what can sheath this day the naked sword?

ÆMILIUS.

A truce I'll offer, bind myself by vow

(Nor is the practice new or strange in war)

Within a certain time to yield the city,

If not reliev'd; the time, this scroll directs,

The fourth revolving day.

L 2

VARUS.

VARUS.

I see thine aim.

Ere that, the blow is struck by GORDIANUS;
Ere that shall VARUS spread his Roman eagle,
And chase the raven of Dalmatia home.

ÆMILIUS.

Thou think'st the tyrant will accept those terms?

VARUS.

I hold it certain: he can wish no more;
Unknown to him th' approach of GORDIANUS.
By MARKS, the father of the Roman race,
Whose spear omnipotent in battle rules,
My life shall stand betwixt your sons and death.

CORNELIA.

O best of friends! This is the work of heaven,
Whose awful purposes, unconscious man
Promotes, and fondly thinks he serves his own:
Thus from remotest Britain's frozen shore
The tyrant to his aid the warrior calls,
Who comes, a weapon in the hand of Jove,
To smite the proud usurper, and preserve
My children.

ÆMILIUS.

Yea, his country and mankind.

VARUS.

May the event these pleasing hopes fulfil.
I, that have been a soldier from my youth,
And fought out many a hard unequal conflict
With tribes and nations who no mercy knew,
Yet never felt my bosom thus alarm'd.

ÆMILIUS.

A TRAGEDY. 211

ÆMILIUS.

For us, for Rome, thy Roman mind is mov'd.

VARUS.

In a new path I tread. I, that ne'er us'd

Diffimulation, must a while dissemble.

Soon may the hour of nobler action come!

When in the front of my brave troops I stand,

And dare the hateful tyrant with my sword,

My heart shall beat no more. My friends, farewell!

CORNELIA,

The gods protect thee, VARUS!

VARUS.

Consul, 'tis meet

You hold your troops prepar'd, and from the walls

Each motion watch, that rises in our camp.

ÆMILIUS.

My vigilance shall equal the occasion.

Exit VARUS.

'Tis, as thou said'st, indeed the hand of heaven!

Ye powers supreme! who guide the line of fate,

Whose winding course eludes the sense of man,

Who could have thought that from our deep distress,

My sons' captivity, and threaten'd death,

Should spring the ruin of insulting MAXIMIN?

CORNELIA.

Him, who contemns the gods, the gods will punish

Now or hereafter. To the altar I

Of Jove will hasten, and his power implore.

Here LUCIUS comes.

L 3

Enter

*Enter LUCIUS.**ÆMILIUS.*

What tidings?

LUCIUS.

Good, my lord!

Far on the distant heights that close the vale,
 The watchmen have descried a welcome sight,
 Eagles and standards glittering in the sun,
 Squadrons of horse that move along the hill.
 Your faithful soldiers in loud shouts rejoice,
 And hail the van of GORDIANUS' host.

ÆMILIUS.

Too soon, great gods! they come.

LUCIUS.

Too soon, my lord!

That cannot be. In a most happy hour
 Relief approaches. For in every street
 Th' afflicted citizens exclaim against you,
 And, as they pass, upbraid the patient soldier
 For tame submission to your rigid will;
 Which even your children's danger cannot bend.

ÆMILIUS.

Would to the gods their murmurs and reproaches
 Were all I had to bear!

*Enter a Herald and an Officer
 from MAXIMIN.*

Now bursts the storm.

CORNELIA.

CORNELIA.

This is not VARUS. Sternly he comes on.

This is the dreadful harbinger of death.

OFFICER.

Consul ! I come from MAXIMIN ; that prince
Whose wrath is terrible, now burns with wrath
At thee, and sends me to denounce his vengeance.

He hath discover'd thy unworthy arts ;

The fraudulent proposal of a truce,

When thou did'st know the rebel host drew near.

Hither I come to cut all treaties short,

And to pronounce thy sons' immediate death,

Unless, without delay, thou yield'st this city,

Thyself, thy legions, freely to his mercy.

ÆMILIUS.

A cruel message harshly thou deliver'st,

The dreadful echo of thy threat'ning lord,

He grows in his demands.

OFFICER.

'Tis fit he should

When basely dealt with : treachery still finds

Its due reward from him.

ÆMILIUS.

Ha ! who art thou,

Who dar'st presume thus to address the consul ?

OFFICER.

I am the slave of MAXIMIN ; if thou

Hast any other name, it is a worse one,

Rebel, proud Roman !

L 4

ÆMILIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

Thou'rt protected, slave!
 Thy character is sacred; else—Barbarian!
 Return to MAXIMIN, the terms I sent
 By VARUS I adhere to, and expect
 Another answer, by a gentler herald.

CORNELIA.

Thou art no Roman. Wilt thou deign to tell
 Thy name and country?

OFFICER.

DUMNORIX my name,

My country Gaul.

CORNELIA.

And of Ligurian race,
 Chief of the band Pretorian, art thou not?

OFFICER.

I am, and faithful to the prince I serve.

CORNELIA.

Faithful to evil, false to all that's good!
 To nature and humanity a traitor;
 Contriver of the murder of my children!
 My soul by strong antipathy divin'd thee,
 And shudder'd at thee as her evil genius.

ÆMILIUS.

CORNELIA, beware, thou wrong'st thyself,
 Thus to expose to him thy wounded heart.

OFFICER.

VARUS, your countryman, hath told you, Lady!
 What counsel I suggested to my prince.

This

A TRAGEDY.

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This I expected from a Roman messenger,
Whose treachery his master soon shall know,
He told you true. From me the counsel came;
I thought the dames of Rome had lov'd their children.

[Exit DUMNORIX.]

CORNELIA.

Oh! my husband! What remedy, what hope!

ÆMILIUS.

In VARUS still I trust. The troops of Rome
Are near at hand. That insolent Ligurian
Hath chaf'd me to the height. O! awful Rome!
Where are thy honours? Queen of all the earth!
How art thou fallen! When a vile slave like this,
Insults thy consul, and decrees the doom
Of thy Patrician race! If this must be,
'Tis time to die; we all have liv'd too long.

CORNELIA.

I felt the insult, but my feeble anger
Blaz'd for a moment only. Other passions
Soon quench'd my indignation. O! my children!

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

To arms, my lord! The enemy comes on.

ÆMILIUS.

We are prepar'd, for MAXIMIN is known.
I look'd for this attack. Against what gate
Bend they their force?

L 5

OFFICER.

OFFICER.

They threaten every gate;
 For all their legions move. Distinct I saw
 Three mighty columns shoaling to the plain,
 And in their front are carriages advanc'd
 Loaded with beams and rafters, fit to frame
 Some engine strong, against our batter'd walls.

ÆMILIUS.

Be not afraid. [To CORNELIA.]

[A shout.]

What means that fearful cry?

CORNELIA.

A cry! it was a groan, a dreadful groan,
 As if a multitude, a legion died.

ÆMILIUS.

Farewell!

CORNELIA.

My lord, one moment stay, behold!

Enter LUCIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

From whence that dismal cry?

OFFICER.

Alas! alas!

It was the people's voice, the soldiers voice,
 Lamenting for your sons.

CORNELIA.

Already! heaven!

ÆMILIUS.

A TRAGEDY.

227

ÆMILIUS.

Say, what has befallen?

OFFICER.

Still, my lord, they live?

But on the verge of death the brothers stand.

CORNELIA.

Still they live!

ÆMILIUS.

Uninterrupted now relate,

Without a comment, what thy eyes have seen.

OFFICER.

The host of MAXIMIN for fight afay'd,
In three huge columns onward slowly mov'd,
And when their van had reach'd the little hill,
From whence the fountain springs, fast by the wall
The army halted : then appear'd a band,
Busy artificers, who rear'd in haste,
A pile we wonder'd at; but soon was chang'd
Our wonder into sorrow, when we knew
It was a scaffold; and beheld your sons,
Guarded and bound, draw near. That spectacle
Produc'd the cry.

CORNELIA.

O! insupportable!

My lord! my husband! oh!

ÆMILIUS.

Matron, retire,

And hide thy anguish from the common eye.

L 6

CORNELIA.

CORNELIA.

Ha ! whither dost thou go ?

ÆMILIUS.

Streight to the gate.

CORNELIA.

Where thou art, I will be. I cannot leave thee,
Have mercy upon me, your sons, yourself,
And to necessity a little yield ;
Intreat a short delay, new terms propound,
Let not your children die.

ÆMILIUS.

'Think'st thou thy sons

Will chuse a life, bought by their father's shame ?
If right my soul divines of both my boys,
What they dread most this instant, is to live,
Redeem'd inglorious with my honour lost.

CORNELIA.

I am encompassed ; on a pointed rock
I stand, a dreadful gulph on either side.

ÆMILIUS.

The time is not expir'd ; some hours the sun
Hath yet to fall ; this awful preparation
Is meant to terrify and shake my soul,
That I may bow before the next demand.
Go to the palace, when a message comes
From the fell tyrant, thou shalt hear it answered.

CORNELIA.

Deal not, my lord, deceitfully with me.
I have a right, a mother's right.

ÆMILIUS.

A TRAGEDY.

119

ÆMILIUS.

Be calm,

Let me conjure thee by the sacred names
Of thy great ancestors, who died for Rome,
Remember them, and prove thyself their daughter.

[Exit ÆMILIUS.]

CORNELIA *alone*.

My ancestors! alas! ill-omen'd names!
Ye shades of heroes, o'er the world renown'd
For virtue, and for great misfortunes fam'd!
Why should I think of you, but to confirm
The dire presage that rises from my heart?
Your matchless worth exempted not from ills,
But was the cause recorded of your ruin.
Sprung from your blood, I fear that I am born
Heir to the fortunes of the fated line.

[Exit CORNELIA.]

The End of the THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.*Enter LUCIUS.*

I Will report the truth ; too visible
 Is the sad object from our crowded walls.
 Unhappy mother ! whom excess of anguish
 Drives to pursue additional distress !
 O ! good and great *ÆMILIUS* ! how my soul
 Is griev'd for thee, and for thy valiant sons !
 Whom I so oft have carried in my arms.
 My generous master made me free in vain ;
 Still I remain'd a voluntary slave,
 Prefer'd his service in a foreign land
 To sweet *LARISSA*, and my native shore.
 My only son, under his roof brought forth,
 Born on the day that gave young *TITUS* birth,
 Bred up with him in every Roman art,
 Unlike the rudeness of our simple land,
 Wild with despair, vows he will not outlive
 His dear, dear lord ! his kind, his noble master.

*Enter CORNELIA.**CORNELIA.*

Calamity comes on me like a torrent,
 And overwhelms a mind not us'd to woe.

Ha!

A TRAGEDY. 231

Ha! LUCIUS, hast thou seen my hapless sons?
Say, can I view them from th' adjacent wall?

LUCIUS.

Too well, alas! conspicuous they stand.

CORNELIA.

LUCIUS, lead on.

LUCIUS.

Reluctant I obey.

I fear the transports of a mother's mind.

CORNELIA.

I will behold them; I will see my children;
Whate'er befall me; I will gaze upon them,
Tho' frantic madness should my soul surprize;
All lesser fears are in a greater lost.
Haste and conduct me.

LUCIUS.

The sad spectacle

Is near at hand.

CORNELIA.

O! feeble limbs that fail,
And weakly serve the strength of my despair!

LUCIUS.

'Tis nature shrinks. O! lady! yet be warn'd.

CORNELIA.

No; if my wretched limbs refuse their office,
The arms of slaves shall bear me to the wall.
I'm firmer now, proceed.

LUCIUS.

The herald comes.

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CORNELIA.

The last of heralds; but I will not tarry.

[*Exeunt CORNELIA and LUCIUS.*]

Enter Herald and VARUS.

VARUS.

This is the place appointed by the consul;
Find, and inform him quickly of my presence.

[*Exit Herald.*]

VARUS alone.

They must not die. It were a deed to strike
Horror from pole to pole. The Parthian fierce,
And the wild Moor would tremble at the tale,
And mark accurst the pale of Roman empire.
Tyrant, too savage over beasts to rule!
Fidelity to thee were horrid treason
To human nature, to the gracious gods,
Who o'er distressed humanity preside.
This day has full display'd the tyrant's soul,
And ripen'd thoughts long growing in my breast.
'Tis vain to think of antient freedom now;
The Senate, and the People are no more.
Rome's vast dominions for the scepter call,
The world subdu'd, one master must command.
But let us have a monarch, not a tyrant,

Enter ÆMILIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

VARUS return'd! can MAXIMIN relent!

VARUS.

VARUS.

Never! his rage would stab the hoary Priest
Before the altar. Hardly have I gain'd
This last renewal of the first conditions.

ÆMILIUS.

Where is the host of Rome?

VARUS.

Far distant still.

Those squadrons, that in evil hour alarm'd
The tyrant, and defeated our design,
The zeal of GORDIANUS had advanced
To cheer your troops, with promise of relief.

ÆMILIUS.

'Tis fate o'erwhelms us. To the tyrant bear
My first and latest answer. With delight,
With transport I would die to save my sons;
But will not save them by an act of baseness.

VARUS.

With fortitude, with dignity, ÆMILIUS,
Thou hast sustain'd this cruel shock of fortune,
And justify'd the sentiments of Rome,
That plac'd her sovereign confidence in thee.
Now hear the counsel of a faithful friend,
Anxious for thee, and zealous for his country.

ÆMILIUS.

No vain desire of glory rules my breast;
I feel the throbs of nature: all I wish
Is to be just to Rome; I envy not,
Nor emulate the older Brutus' fame.

VARUS.

VARUS.

The proffer'd terms accept, and save thy children,
 Rome shall not suffer : when her troops draw near,
 I will forsake the tyrant's shatter'd side,
 And fix the fortune of the future field.

ÆMILIUS.

Compassion dictates this delusive counsel;
 Thy pity for a miserable father;
 But chance may marr thy generous design,
 And deep dismay for Aquileia lost,
 Confound the legions that contend for Rome.
 Then whither shall forlorn *ÆMILIUS* fly?
 Where shall he hide him from reproach and shame?
 What joy, what comfort, will his children yield,
 When he and they with infamy must dwell?
 A new companion to our noble race.
 No ! rather let the blow tremendous fall,
 And crush us in the path our fathers trod.
 I see the image of my bleeding country:
 I hear the voice of Rome her consul call,
 The chosen guardian in her last extreme,
 City of Gods ! mother of heroes fam'd
 Like gods of old ! shall I abandon thee,
 For whom so many noble youths have died,
 So many fathers ?

Enter CORNELIA.

Now, my heart, be firm.

COR.

CORNELIA.

Where is ÆMILIUS? the hard-hearted father,
Who whets the tyrant's sword against his children?

ÆMILIUS.

Alas, CORNELIA!

CORNELIA.

I have seen my sons,
Both bound with chains: I saw the deadly ax,
And the stern villain standing by their side.
Consul! I kneel to thee! O hear thy wife!
Hear me, my husband, whilst I yet have sense
And reason left to regulate my words.
O drive me not to madness, to despair;
Already wavering on the brink I stand,
In agony extreme.

ÆMILIUS.

Trust in the gods;
They sooth the agonies of guiltless woe,
But to despair resign the self-condemn'd.
O my beloved wife, do not assail
Thy husband's soul, that labours to be just.
Heaven knows how dear to my afflicted heart
Thou, and the pledges of our virtuous love,
Have ever been; more dear than ever now.
But if their danger, and thy fears should bend
My yielding mind to baseness and to shame,
Remorse would break the concord of our love,
And hate succeed to criminal affection.

COR-

The Siege of AQUILINA

CORNELIA.

Me only hate; acquit thy noble sons,
Too like thyself; ÆMILIUS, had'st thou seen,
Thy sons, as I beheld them from the ramparts,
With head erect, and high, my PAULUS stood,
I knew his stature eminent; unmov'd,
And stedfast was his gesture, firm he seem'd,
Like a strong castle on its rocky base.
The port of TITUS shew'd a mind less calm.
Around he look'd, and from his scornful eyes,
Threw on his foes defiance, and disdain.
At last in earnest speech the brothers join'd,
I saw them whisper; PAULUS bow'd his head.
The multitude, long silent at my presence,
Lamented then; the weeping mothers clasp'd
Their infants to their breasts, and look'd at me.
I left the walls, to find thee out, my husband!
And lead thee thither, that thou might'st relent.

ÆMILIUS.

Relent, CORNELIA! O eternal powers,
That see the anguish of my tortur'd soul,
Sustain me still; let not my duty yield
To the strong yearning of a father's heart.

CORNELIA.

Why speaks not VARUS? Has he too conspir'd
Against me and my children?

VARUS.

I have spoke,
And told the consul, that his sons may live,
And Roman arms o'er MAXIMIN prevail.

COR.

A TRAGEDY. 237

CORNELIA.

What would'st thou more? inexorable man!

VARUS.

I see the bottom of thy troubled mind,
And in this awful hour reverse thy virtue,
Which stands aloof, and trembles at dishonour.
But hear this new addition to my counsel;
Soldiers I have, in every danger try'd,
Bred to hard service in our British wars,
Accustom'd to explore the forests wild,
Alone, amidst the perils of the night,
And mingle fearless with the savage foes;
Disguis'd in their attire and uncouth arms,
Of those the most expert, I will dispatch,
That GORDIANUS may his arms advance.

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My Lord, your son approaches.

CORNELIA.

Ha! my son!

OFFICER.

TITUS, your son, attended by a herald,
Slow thro' the gazing multitude proceeds,
Who weep and bless him.

ÆMILIUS.

Ha! what change is this?

Of-

OFFICER.

The herald, as he passes, scatters gladness,
Saying that TITUS comes to end the war,
And to compassion move his father's mind.

ÆMILIUS.

TITUS! does TITUS come to plead compassion?
Now, destiny, thou tramplest down ÆMILIUS.
Go tell him, Herald, that I will not see him,
Let him not come to hear me curse the hour
That made me father of a son like him.

CORNELIA.

Judge not so rashly, see and hear thy son.

ÆMILIUS.

Mention him not; that father has my envy
Who mourneth o'er his sons in battle slain.
Short-sighted mortals! Let no man repine
When fate bereaves him of the child he loves;
Amidst his anguish let him think of mine,
And that will comfort him.

CORNELIA.

This is not well,

Nor like my son; yet valour cannot change
Its quality so quickly. He hath prov'd
His dauntless courage. Death in terror clad
Could not dismay him. But his noble mind
Is sway'd by pity of his brother's fate,
In his involv'd.

Enter

A TRAGEDY. 239

Enter TITUS.

ÆMILIUS.

Gods! unabash'd he seems,

Nor at his most inglorious purpose blushes.

[ÆMILIUS turns from him.]

CORNELIA.

Dear to thy mother still.

TITUS.

[To his father.]

Torn not away,

Nor hold thy TITUS of one look unworthy.

ÆMILIUS.

Art thou my TITUS? Thou that fear'st to die,

And comes a servile suppliant for life!

With coward prayers to seduce the consul.

No! thou art not my son. I had a son!

Whose only fault was valour to excess,

Whose fatal courage was the source of ills

Which he was bound in honour to sustain.

Thou art not he! thou scandal to thy country!

Thou tool of MAXIMIN.

TITUS.

Wrong not thy son.

Fast roll the number'd moments of my life,

And I must hasten to redeem my fame.

CORNELIA.

I fear, but know not what his words portend.

TITUS.

TITUS.

I have deceiv'd the tyrant, and am come
 No messenger nor counsellor of shame.
 The cause of honour, of my father's honour,
 The cause of Rome against myself I plead,
 And in my voice the noble PAULUS speaks,
 Let no man pity us ; aloft we stand
 On a high theatre, objects I think
 Of admiration and of envy rather.
 The tyrant and his menac'd deaths we scorn,
 The chearful victims of our sacred country.

ÆMILIUS.

Hear this ! O earth and heaven ! my son ! my pride !
 Come to thy father's arms ; now, now I know
 My blood again. O bitter pleasing hour !
 For I must lose thee, lose thee, O my hero !
 Now when I love thee best, and most admire.

CORNELIA.

Preserve that virtue which you thus admire,
 My son ! my husband ! VARUS, pity me.

TITUS.

This to prevent I came ; the force I fear'd
 Of strong affection, and a mother's tears.
 We saw the busy heralds come and go,
 And trembled lest the consul might be won ;
 For ebbing resolution ne'er returns,
 But still falls farther from its former shore.
 To aid my father in this trying hour
 Did I assume a dastard's vile disguise.

ÆMI-

A TRAGEDY. 341

ÆMILIUS.

And did I meet you with reproach and anger?
With scorn encounter my devoted son,
Who came to strengthen and support his fire?
Forgive me, last of the Æmilian line!
Pure and unstain'd the current of our blood
Ends as it long has flow'd.

CORNELIA.

O VARUS! speak;

Tell them, thou guardian angel of thy country!
That Rome does not this sacrifice demand.
Why should they die in vain?

VARUS.

Thou noble youth,
Whose life more and more precious still I deem,
I am the friend of Rome; of yonder host
No slender part under my ensigns move.
With them I watch the tyrant's overthrow,
And guard my country with a stronger power,
Than Aquileia, and her feeble walls.
Great is thy glory, thou hast reach'd the top
Of magnanimity in bloom of youth,
The REGULUS reviv'd of antient Rome;
Inflexible to terror, yield to prudence,
No tongue shall tax thine or thy father's fame.

TITUS.

Renowned VARUS! often have I heard
Of thee, and of thy virtues; oft rejoic'd,
That I could claim affinity with them;

M

But

But not the sanction of thy honour'd voice,
 Not all the credence due to worth like thine,
 Can move my stedfast mind. There is but one,
 One only path which mortals safely tread,
 The sacred path of rectitude and truth.
 I follow, tho' it leads me to the tomb.
 Forgive me, noble Roman! o'er thy head,
 Perhaps, this instant dire discovery hangs,
 And thou and Rome are lost, and basely lost.
 No, let the consul, as he ought, defy
 The tyrant's threat'ning, and rely on heav'n.
 For me, and PAULUS too, our hearts are fix'd,
 Deliberation of our state is vain:
 For if the consul should the city yield,
 Inevitable death abides his sons.

CORNELIA.

Eternal Gods! thy mystic words explain.

TITUS.

A solemn oath determin'd we have sworn,
 Ne'er to survive the ignominious ransom.
 Restor'd to liberty, to death we fly,
 And perish mutual by each other's sword.

ÆMILIUS.

Immortal Gods! who gave me sons like these,
 Forake them not, but guard your work divine.

CORNELIA.

My best lov'd! my darling! my fond heart
 Bleeds tenderness for thee. But there is something
 So awful and so great, a glory round thee,

Which

Which dazzles and o'erwhelms me. O my son!
Is life a burden? Lov'st thou not thy parents?
Who for the love of thee would gladly die.

TITUS.

Think not, O best of mothers, best of women,
That with unfilial arrogance I speak.
My heart is full this instant of affection,
Hard to suppress. Dear to my soul are those
I leave behind, bitter to me their sorrows.
But destiny supreme hath mark'd my way:
And I accept what honour cannot shun.
By trivial accident, by various ills
Fatal to man, thou might'st have lost thy sons,
And they in dark oblivion would have slept:
But now I see the goal that Jove assigns,
And glory terminates our short career.
Be this thy comfort; I avow it mine.
Admir'd and mourn'd by Rome, for Rome we die,
Of fate secure, immortal is our fame,
And spotless laurels deck thy childrens tomb.

CORNELIA.

Mysterious Powers! how strange is my distress!
Thy virtue, TITUS, rends thy mother's heart!
Ev'n now the grandeur of thy tow'ring soul
Exalts my humbler mind to thoughts like thine:
But when thou goest, alas! I sink again,
Like the weak Pythian when her God has left her.

TITUS.

My father!

ÆMILIUS.

O my son, thou art the judge
 And arbiter of fate. Time, rapid fly,
 And bring a joyful victory to Rome.
 Let me but see the scale of combat turn'd,
 And die in glad assurance of her safety.

VARUS.

The hero's fire invades my secret soul:
 Like his my bosom burns. You shall not die,

[To TITUS.]

Unaided and alone. Perhaps the Gods!—
 I know not that; but I will raise a pile
 Of glorious ruin. Shine, ye stars of Rome.
 First in the column stand my British bands.

[To ÆMILIUS.]

Prepare your squadrons, and protract the time
 Of his return.

*Enter PRIEST of JUPITER, and the younger LUCIUS.**PRIEST.*

Consul of mighty Rome!
 Firm be the purpose of the present hour.
 The fire of Gods a happy sign hath giv'n:
 Trust in the aid of heav'n's eternal king,
 His adamantinæ ægis Jove extends.

VARUS.

Romans and friends, farewell! Undaunted TITUS,
 I go to aid thee too with mortal arms. *[Exit VARUS.]*

TITUS.

A TRAGEDY. 245

TITUS.

Deem me not impious, servant of the Gods!
Thee, and thy sacred office I revere.
But signs and omens may our thoughts deceive.
Men may mistake the purposes of heav'n;
The shield of Jove guards not the brave man's life,
Nor wards his body from the mortal blow,
A shield there is, that never can be pierc'd,
The heav'nly armour of a mind resolv'd.
That mail who wears against all force is clad,
And triumphs o'er the fate by which he falls.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER.

My Lords! th' assembled citizens demand
An audience.

ÆMILIUS.

Tell them, No. It will require
My presence to appease their fearful clamour.
Retire, my son, and, till the herald comes,
A sad but dear society enjoy. *[Exeunt.]*

The End of the FOURTH ACT.

M 3

ACT

A C T V.

*The Trumpets sound.**Enter TITUS, CORNELIA, and ÆMILIUS.*

TITUS.

FOR me the trumpet sounds.

CORNELIA.

O dreadful sound!

TITUS.

The hour is come.

CORNELIA.

Alas! not yet, my son!

To the last moment stay. So VARUS counsell'd.

TITUS.

The herald's at the gate. I must not stay,
 Nor linger, like a criminal oppress
 With shameful fears. Farewell, my fire, farewell!

CORNELIA.

Thou goest to die, and say'st thou but farewell?
 It were too little, if from Rome thou went'st
 A sportful journey to the Baian shore.
 Put thou art going never to return,
 To the dark region.

TITUS.

TITUS.

Where all men have gone :

Where all must go ; but glorious is the path
 Thy offspring tread. An honourable death
 Is the sole gift which fate cannot resume,
 Methinks it suits us not thus to discourse :
 Combat thy grief, and make our parting noble.

CORNELIA.

Nature forbids. I cannot conquer nature.
 Speak not so firm, look not so unconcern'd :
 Leave in thy mother's ear some tender words,
 Fit for eternal memory.

TITUS.

If thou lov'st,

O spare thy son, lest MAXIMIN should think
 He has subdued me. No. He shall not see
 Upon my cheek the vestige of a tear.

ÆMILIUS.

Thy spirit shall inspire thy father's soul,
 Till to the shades he sinks to meet thee there :
 Then to the founders of immortal Rome
 I'll point my heroes.—To my PAULUS this,

[Embraces.]

And now, farewell.

CORNELIA.

Alas ! thy fire despairs,
 He quits thy hand ; till now I ne'er despair'd.
 The moment is arriv'd, the dreadful moment,
 I durst not think of, and cannot endure.

M 4

O TITUS!

O TITUS! TITUS! let me clasp thy neck.
 My son! those eyes I never shall behold
 In living lustre more.

Enter LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

Strife and confusion
 Reign in the tyrant's camp. Himself I saw
 Leap from his high tribunal.

ÆMILIUS.

Sound th' alarm.

This is the work of VARUS.

TITUS.

Consul, beware.

Hostility from thee is breach of faith,
 Whilst I remain.

ÆMILIUS.

Too true, my son! Begone,
 And free thy father's sword.

CORNELIA. [*Embraces him.*]

He shall not go.

One instant saves him, keeps him from the storm.
 My arms have strength enough to hold my son,
 My only left, for now his brother dies.

TITUS.

Nothing shall hold me. I have deeply sworn,
 And left my brother pledge of my return;
 Left him, to bear alone the tyrant's rage,

To

To die by torture, if I break my faith.
Thus would'st thou buy my life ! Unhand me freight,
Or I must tear myself.

ÆMILIUS.

Thy frenzy, woman,
Cuts off our last resource, adds shame to ruin ;
I will not, cannot succour noble VARUS,
And much-wrong'd PAULUS, till thou sett'st him free.
The clamour ceases, Oh ! what hast thou done ?

CORNELIA.

There, let him go, and perish with his brother.
Forgive this action ; for excess of anguish
Deprives CORNELIA of her reason's aid.
Now comes the raven that still bodes my woes.

Enter Herald and DUMNORIX.

DUMNORIX.

Captive, the time's expir'd.

TITUS.

Soldier, 'tis well.

Turn to the gate thy steps, I follow thee.

DUMNORIX.

Thou art the first that e'er employ'd deceit
Against himself ; thy artifice prevails.

[To ÆMILIUS.]

Roman ! once more, tho' not from love, I speak ;
Yield thee, for now thou hast no hope in VARUS.

ÆMILIUS.

Who told thee, that my resolution stood
On such a hope ? What hath befallen VARUS ?

M 5

DUM-

DUMNORIX.

His treason is detested; he himself
Seiz'd, and condemn'd with thy rash sons to die.

CORNELIA.

Eternal Gods!—How did the legions brook
Their valiant leader's fate?

DUMNORIX.

Her tongue betrays
Your secret expectation of revolt,
Where all is calm submission. VARUS came
From hence, entrusted with your last resolve,
And, like an orator, address'd himself
To the tribunal, with a voice so rais'd,
That every soldier in the circle heard;
And as he told a tale to move their pity,
A sudden murmur rose. The emperor
Leapt from his throne, and call'd aloud to seize
The artful traitor. Soon his guards obey'd.

ÆMILIUS.

VARUS, the noble VARUS, too must die.
But there are Gods above! Vengeance is theirs,
The tyrant yet shall feel.

CORNELIA.

Will vengeance raise
My children from the tomb?

DUMNORIX.

Thou question'st well.
Matron, I pity thee. Canst thou not move

Thy

Thy husband's heart to spare his dying sons,
Nor win thy children to consent to live?

CORNELIA.

Thou pity me! thou, whose inhuman soul
Devis'd the counsel that has caus'd my woe.
In vain dost thou attempt my troubled mind;
Had I a magic voice, to cleave the earth,
To pluck the sun and moon from their high sphere,
Unmov'd my husband and my sons would hear me.

TITUS.

This ineffectual conference I'll end.

[To DUMNORIX.]

'Tis not your office, sir, to counsel here,
Conduct me to the camp.

DUMNORIX.

I will, be sure.

The death that thou hast courted, now abides thee:
Come, try the rough embrace.

TITUS.

Lead on, Ligurian!

I answer to thy lord.

[Going.]

CORNELIA.

TITUS, my son!

Break, break my heart, for I can bear no more.

[Swoons.]

TITUS.

She faints, support her; now let me escape
From her affliction: think of Rome, my father! [Exit.]

[CORNELIA is carried off.]

M 6

Manet

*Manet ÆMILIUS.**ÆMILIUS.*

Of Rome! aye, and of thee, of thee, my son,
 And of thy brother. O unequal'd pair,
 Your deeds, your destiny have rais'd your fire
 Above the pitch of man. My heart is steel,
 I weep not, nor complain. Relentless fiend,
 Inhuman MAXIMIN! for thee I live;
 To bury in thy hated breast my sword,
 Then die upon the blow.

*Enter LUCIUS.**LUCIUS.*

Thy faithful slave,
 Uncall'd, intrudes upon his master's woe.
 Resign not to despair thy noble mind,
 Still there is hope.

ÆMILIUS.

Affectionate old man!

Thou speak'st thy earnest wish, but my frail hopes
 Were wreck'd with VARUS.

LUCIUS.

Oft when wisdom fails,
 Chance interposes, and achieves the deed.
 The British legions, wheeling from their host,

An

An angry parley with the tyrant hold,
And every rank re-echoes VARUS' name.

ÆMILIUS.

Immortal gods! Would I were at their head.
A single spark may kindle up the flame.

LUCIUS.

My son, devoted to his master's fate,
Arm'd like a soldier of the tyrant's guard,
Mix'd with the herald's train.

ÆMILIUS.

O generous youth!

Perhaps—but I have nourish'd hope too much.
He who divests him of that constancy
Which stands in expectation of the worst,
Encounters fortune with a naked breast.
I will do so no more. Now I go forth
Less credulous of what my soul desires,
But not remiss to seize on swift occasion,
And urge it to the utmost. LUCIUS, stay
And tell CORNELIA—She has no support,
No medicine, but hope—I'll to the gate.

[Exit ÆMILIUS.]

Manet LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

O best of men, I know where thou wilt go,
The first alarm provokes thee to the field,
One fate abides the children, and their fire.
Tyrannic fortune! when thou raisest up

T

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No medicine, but hope—I'll to the gate.

[Exit ÆMILIUS.]

Manet LUCIUS.

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Tyrannic fortune! when thou raisest up

To

254 *The Siege of AQUILIA.*

To envy'd eminence the sons of men,
 Thou but prepar'ft a triumph for thyself,
 A second triumph from their grievous fall.
 Alike the column, and its ruins, mark
 Thy sovereign fway. Now LUCIUS will obey
 Thy orders, lord; then hasten to thy fide;
 The humble shrub fhall with the cedar fall.

[CORNELIA *behind the Scene.*

CORNELIA.

Stand off.

LUCIUS.

CORNELIA's voice; it founds of woe.

[*Enter CORNELIA, followed by her woman.*

CORNELIA.

Stand off, I fay, and let me find my husband.
 Fit mate for me, for me, whose eyes have feen
 The murder of my child.

LUCIUS.

Alas! alas!

The blow at laft hath fall'n.

CORNELIA.

His ftreaming blood

I faw.

LUCIUS.

His blood! whom has the tyrant spar'd!

CORNELIA.

None, LUCIUS, none. I tarry'd not to fee
 A fecond ftroke. Oh lead me to my husband.

LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

He guards the gate.

[*Sound of trumpets.*]

But hark his trumpets sound,
And sound a charge. Lady, my son went forth
To rouse the British legions to defend
Their leader, and thy sons. That sound proclaims
Tumult and war are up. My lord is there.

[*Exit.*]

Manent CORNELIA and attendants.

CORNELIA.

The frantic father rushes to revenge
His sons; or throw the load of life away.
The desolate CORNELIA she remains,
Her children murder'd, and her husband slain.

Enter PRIEST.

Where are thy omens, thy predictions too,
Thou priest of falshood!

PRIEST.

Know 'twas VARUS fell,
And not thy son; his fall the signal prov'd
Of instant battle. With a whirlwind's rage
His legions rush'd upon the tyrant's guard;
Thy valiant sons are free, and lead the fight.

CORNELIA.

CORNELIA.

Can this be truth? Shall I again believe,
And wake me from the dreadful dream of death
That had possess my soul?

PRIEST.

Matron! thy sons,
Thy husband too, victorious shall return.
I saw the bird of Jove his wings extend,
And hover o'er their battle; still he bears
Upon his pinions conquest.

CORNELIA.

Say'st thou so!

Then heaven and thou forgive me. Jove supreme!
If I have ought offended, on my head,
On mine alone, let all thy wrath descend;
But spare my sons, and spare their blameless fire.

Enter LUCIUS.

LUCIUS.

Lady, rejoice, the tyrant is no more;
His barbarous cohorts yield.

CORNELIA.

Blest be thy tongue.
But tell me of my sons, and of their father?

LUCIUS.

With voice and hand they urge the fainting foe,
Whose courage with their furious leader died.
Long, like a mound against the raging main,

Stood

Stood MAXIMIN, the bulwark of his host;
 His strength defied the fury of the storm;
 Till to the van resistless TITUS came.
 By TITUS' noble arm the giant fell,
 And o'er him rush'd the war.

CORNELIA.

Not without crash
 And havock round him, such a ruin fell.
 O minister of heaven! why dost thou bend
 Thine eye on empty space, and gaze on air?
 Can'st thou descry the future, or perceive
 Events accomplish'd, tho' unknown?

PRIEST.

'Tis done.

The weary sisters rest. CYLLENIOUS—comes,
 Like a bright meteor streaming down the vault
 Of azure heaven; in his right hand the rod,
 And in his left, a laurel dropping blood,
 Behold!

Enter ÆMILIUS attended.

CORNELIA.

My husband! oh! Where hast thou left
 Thy sons?—

ÆMILIUS.

They come victorious from the field.

CORNELIA.

Why dost thou faintly speak such welcome tidings?
 Thou art not wounded?

ÆMILIUS.

ÆMILIUS.

No.

CORNELIA.

From whence that cloud
Which overcasts thy brow? What damps thy joy?
Tell me, ÆMILIUS! for I read thy soul,
There undivulg'd some cruel evil lies.

ÆMILIUS.

Alas!

CORNELIA.

Thou figh'st not thus for VARUS lost.
My sons, thou say'st, draw near; what is the grief
That wrings thy heart?

ÆMILIUS.

O summon to thine aid
What constancy thou hast; soon shalt thou see
What I would not relate.

CORNELIA.

Ha! am I mock'd

With false reports?

What spectacle is this!

[Enter TITUS wounded, and supported by
PAULUS and soldiers.]

Are these the victors! oh my TITUS dies!

TITUS.

I stood the chance of war. Do not bewail
A fate so far above my highest hope
When last we parted. Men are born to die.

CORNELIA.

CORNELIA.

But not like thee, in youth untimely slain.

TITUS.

This active day has been an age of life.

Rome is deliver'd. Thou hast still a son.

Why mourns my brother o'er a soldier's fall?

PAULUS.

I griev'd not, TITUS! when our lot was equal.

CORNELIA.

There will be wars again to snatch thee too.

Fear not too long a life: the useless live,

The vile, the odious; thy desert is death.

TITUS.

My limbs grow weak, upon the earth I'll rest.

Have I redeem'd my rashness? O my father!

EMILIUS.

'Tis scarce a blemish to be brave to rashness;

To thee Rome owes her safety, her existence;

And with her chief deliverers ranks thy name.

TITUS.

I feel my father's praise, now when the hand

Of death comes near my heart.

CORNELIA.

I will be calm.

O let me not disturb his parting soul.

Sustain me, mighty gods!

TITUS.

To sooth her grief,

My PAULUS, be thy care. My last request,

My

My father, hear. O comfort that good man;
His son before me rushing, in his breast
Receiv'd a javelin, that was aim'd at mine.
Cherish his age.

[Dies.]

ÆMILIUS.

Thou Roman, to the height
Of Roman virtue! to lament for thee,
With common wailings, were a feeble part;
And far beneath the spirit of thy fall;
Unworthy of thy father.

PAULUS.

From this place
Let me persuade my mother to retire.

CORNELIA.

I must behold the dead. Fear not excess,
Nor vehemence from me. Those features wear
A look of triumph. Yes, thy mother's heart,
Amidst her anguish, at that look revives.
The cruel fate thy generous mind embrac'd
Thou hast escap'd, to meet the death thou lov'd'st
In arms, victorious o'er thy prostrate foe.
Now to the place, where I will dwell with grief,
And ever listen to my hero's praise.

[Exit CORNELIA with PAULUS.]

PRIEST.

He fell not till each omen was accomplish'd,
Himself, his brother, and his country free.
No height, beyond the summit where he stood,

On

On earth remain'd : that he might ne'er descend,
The gods could only grant a death like his.

ÆMILIUS.

Hence to the forum bear the noble corpse ;
And let the musick of the legions sound
A warlike symphony, whose strains express
Our mingled state of triumph, and of sorrow.

Exeunt omnes.

EPI

EPILOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. CIBBER.

OUR Author, as I'm told, is not to seek
In antient Lore; in Latin, nor in Greek;
I therefore did advise him, as a friend,
To make his learning serve some useful end:
And let me tell, what rules he hath observ'd,
What unities of time and place preserv'd.
He answer'd, Poetry is not an art;
'Tis nature only frames the poet's heart:
Still as he thinks the scene, he feels along,
And from his bosom bursts the raptur'd song.
This is the sacred oracle, the shrine,
The bard consults, and here, the tuneful Nine.
With the same fire, the bearer's soul must glow,
Else vain to him, the tale of tragick woe.
There is a temper, which is all and all:
That sounds responsive to the poet's call.
Like Memnon's harp, which pour'd harmonious lays,
Whene'er its strings were touch'd by Phæbus' rays.

This

*This temper of the soul is sweet and wild;
 It sobs, or smiles, as sudden as a child;
 To woes imagin'd tears unfeigned gives,
 And in the poet's world of fancy lives.*

*Whilst thus he spoke, a bell was heard to ring;
 He stop'd, and startled like a guilty thing;
 Ere the dread curtain rose, in haste withdrew,
 And at a distance waits his doom from you.*

FINIS.

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